THE OFFICIAL MARVEL® NEWS MAGAZINE!

MARVEL AGE®

THE 25TH

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BEGINS!

Stan Lee presents

MARVEL AGE®

It seems like I've been bombarded with birthdays lately. All last year **Ron Zalme** and I tried to squeeze in as many Bullpen birthdays as we could into the 1985 MARVEL AGE CALENDAR. It's now January 1986 and that means the fourth is **Chic Stone's** birthday, the seventh is **Bob** (I-know-every-line-of-the-*Honeymooners*) **Wiacek's** birthday, the eleventh is **Bob Harras's** birthday, the fourteenth is both **Chantée Foster** and **Rudy Nebres's** birthday, the fifteenth is Star's **Stan Kay's** birthday, the eighteenth is fearless **Fred Bauman's** birthday, the nineteenth is both **Tom Yeates** and **Uncle Milty Schiffman's** birthday, the twentieth is clobberin' **Keith Pollard's** birthday, the twenty-second is both lovely **Nancy Brown** and lovely **Howard Mackie's** birthday, the twenty-third is **Klaus Janson's** birthday, the twenty-fourth is **John Romita Jr.'s** father's birthday, the twenty-sixth is our pal **Sal Buscema's** birthday, the twenty-seventh is both **Frank Miller** and **Steve Leialoha's** birthday, and our very own **Fred Hembeck's** birthday is the thirtieth.

My old friend, **Kool-Aid Man**, will be ten years old this year. I've also been informed that both *the Flintstones* and *the Andy Griffith Show* are celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversaries. Good ol' **Charlie Brown** is celebrating his thirty-fifth birthday. (Good grief) And let me be the first to wish DC Comics a happy fifty-first birthday.

There. Sure hope I haven't forgot anyone.

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MARVEL AGE® Vol. 1, No. 37, April, 1986. (ISSN #8750-4367) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly.

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Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic and Star titles bearing a May cover date.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.
A **Graphic Novel** is a trade paperback-sized edition.
A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.
Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.

Make way for **He-Man**, now in his very own Star comic! If you think *that's* wild, wait until you see what's going on in **THE NEW MUTANTS**! Not only that, but what's with the weapons switcheroo in **CAPTAIN AMERICA**? Can you guess who's behind the **Hobgoblin**'s cowl in **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**?

Before we let you go to find out the answers to these, and other surprises coming at you next month, we want to remind you that these are just a few of the reasons why Marvel comics sell out so fast! Don't miss out on the excitement! Tell your favorite comics shop owner to reserve the titles you want...today!

MARVEL®

COMING ATTRACTIONS

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I'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH!
THE TIME TO STRIKE IS NOW!
I'LL NEVER GET A BETTER OPPORTUNITY TO DESTROY MY MOST HATED ENEMY!
SPIDER-MAN DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE!
HE'S DESTINED TO DIE AT THE HANDS OF HOBGOBLIN!

The Hobgoblin's identity revealed at last—in this month's AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

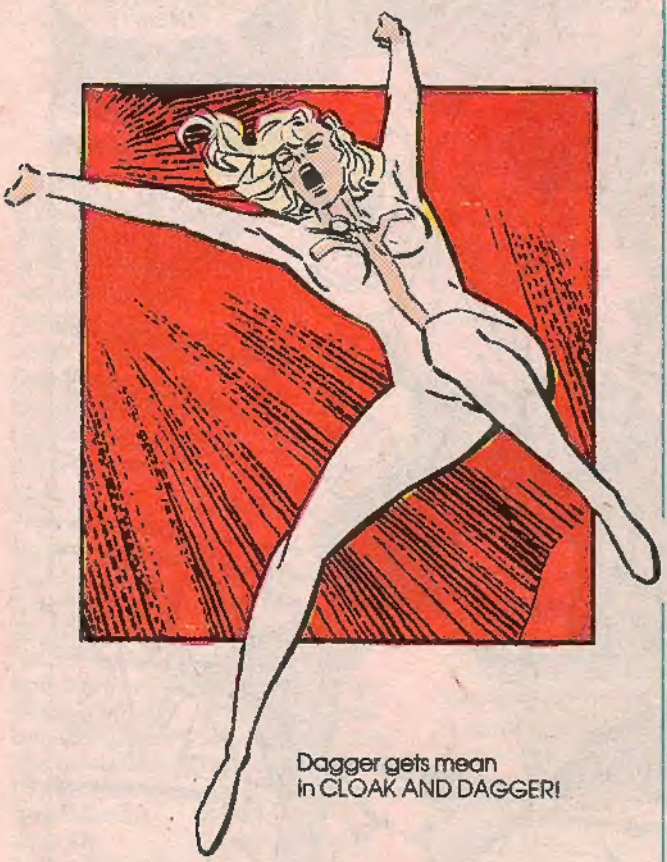
Titles Shipping January 7. On Sale January 28.

☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #6**—All the dark and evil developments of the last few issues come together in a senses-shattering conclusion that will mark the beginning of a new direction for the Angel of Light and the Demon of Darkness! **Nemesis** joins forces with **Cloak** and **Dagger** in "Festival" written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Rick Leonardi** and inked by **Terry Austin**. 75¢.

☐ **DAREDEVIL #230**—Where is **Matt Murdock**? Why has his apartment been blown up? **Karen Page** wants some straight answers! But **the Kingpin** is making sure she'll never get them! "Born Again" is written by **Frank Miller** and drawn by **Dave Mazzucchelli**. 75¢.

☐ **HE-MAN #1**—Yes! **He-Man** is *here*! If you think that's something wait until you read the story! The noble **He-Man** and his arch-enemy, **Skeletor**, *together*? What dread menace could cause it? Only the terror known as **Hordak** and his evil horde! "The Coming of Hordak" is written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Ron Wilson** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS #39**—**The New Mutants** join **the Hellions**! "Pawns to White Queen" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Keith Pollard** and inked by **Del Barras**. 75¢.



Dagger gets mean in CLOAK AND DAGGER!

☐ **PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #7**—Photographer **Peter Porker**, publisher **J. Jonah Jackal** and the cub reporters are sent back in time and trapped in war-torn London of World War III "A Blitz in Time!" is written by **Steve Skeates**, penciled by **Mark Armstrong** and inked by **Joe DeBeato**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **RED SONJA #13**—The final issue of the **RED SONJA** series may also be the last appearance of **Red Sonja** *herself*! Her greatest foe, **Vassilisa Ice-Heart** is about to achieve her long-sought goal—possession of **Red Sonja's** son! "The Demon's Tooth" is written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Mary Wilshire** and inked by **Art Nichols**. 75¢.

☐ **SQUADRON SUPREME #9**—How can **Tom Thumb's** cancer be cured? The answer lies in **the Scarlet Centurion's** future! Meanwhile **Nighthawk** recruits members for his counter-strike force "Borrowed Time." Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Ryan** and inked by **Sam De La Rosa**. 75¢.

☐ **THE THING #35**—**Sharon Ventura** wants power, the kind only **the Power Broker** can give! Then why does she suddenly need **the Thing's** help? And why does she need it—*fast*? "And Now—Ms. Marvel!" written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **Sam De La Rosa**. 75¢.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #14**—**Peter Parker** needs money and he needs it now! And the only thing of value he has is the solid gold notebook, left over from **SECRET WARS II**! The only trouble is, **Peter** isn't so sure it's his to sell! "All That Glitters" is written by **David Michelinine**, penciled by **Mike Harris** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS #8**—It's **the West Coast Avengers** against **The Texas Rangers** with pandemonium reigning—**Master Pandemonium**, that is! Written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. 75¢.

☐ **CONAN THE KING #34**—**King Conan** and his battered army launch a final assault against the invading armies of Ophir, Nemedia and Argos. But the danger on the battlefield is nothing compared to what the traitorous high-priest, **Crassus**, has planned for **Conan's** daughter! "Harvest of Death" is written by **Don Kraar** and drawn by **Mike Docherty**. $1.25.

☐ **SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #6**—War strikes the planet Haven when the all-powerful Colonizer armada attacks **Raader's** home! "Run for Cover" is written by **Bill Mantlo** and drawn by **Geof Isherwood**. An Epic Comic. Baxter paper. For Mature Readers. $1.50.

Titles Shipping January 14. On Sale February 4.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #34**—Find out still more about **Wolverine's** mysterious past as he teams up with the new **Vindicator** to battle an army of futuristic samurai whose goal is to "reclaim" Wolverine's adamantium bones! "Honor" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Sal Buscema** and inked by **Gerry Talaoc**. 75¢.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #317**—What's **Cap** doing with **Hawkeye's** weapons? And what is **Hawkeye** doing with **Cap's** shield? We're not sure ourselves, but we *do* know that the story is crammed with action! "Death Throws" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. 75¢.

☐ **EWOKS #7**—**Teebo** must seek a cure for his perilous laughing spell. But what a cure it is, because it involves making the frightening Night Spirit of Mount Sorrow cry! The real meaning of courage and friendship is discovered in "The Perilous Laughing Spell!" written by **Dave Manak**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **FIRESTAR** (Limited Series) **#3**—"This Lady Kills"—and the lady is **Firestar**! The evil **White Queen** makes the ultimate move to turn **Firestar** into her greatest assassin! Written by

Tom DeFalco, penciled by Mary Wilshire and inked by Steve Leialoha. 75¢.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #15—For killing his master, Groo has been banished to a monastery, where he must take a vow of silence. Groo then proceeds to set a new world's record for vow-breaking! "The Monks" is by Sergio Aragones, with kibitzing by Mark Evanier. An Epic Comic. 75¢.

☐ **MICRONAUTS** #20—The series ends—will the Microverse end with it? The Micronauts make the ultimate sacrifice for the final fate of the Microverse! Wait until you see the visuals! Written by Peter B. Gillis, penciled by Kelley Jones and inked by Danny Bulanadi. 75¢.

☐ **POWER PACK** #22—Two great beginnings in this issue! First, the start of the long awaited Snarks Wars saga that will continue through issue #25. Second, the unveiling of brand new penciller John Bogdanov's powerful pencils! Join John, along with writer Louise Simonson and inker Bob Wiacek, for "Snowday." 75¢.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #276—The Hobgoblin *unmasked*! No kidding! And he's revealed to be one of Pete's closest friends! "Unmasked!" is written by Tom DeFalco, penciled by Ron Frenz and inked by Joe Rubinstein. 75¢.

What a mess!
Can Cap stop the guy who made it?

☐ **THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH** (Limited Series) #8—The High Priest of Zor is back, and is he mad! Can Vision and Wanda stop him from reaching the idol of Zor—even with the help of guest stars Quicksilver, Crystal and Power Man? Find out in "Sweet Sister," written by Steve Englehart, penciled by Richard Howell and inked by Frank Springer. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR** #6—From FANTASTIC FOUR #81 through FF #100 and including annuals #6 and 7, the complete story synopses, credits and color cover reproductions of the world's greatest comic! Compiled by George Olshevsky. $1.25.

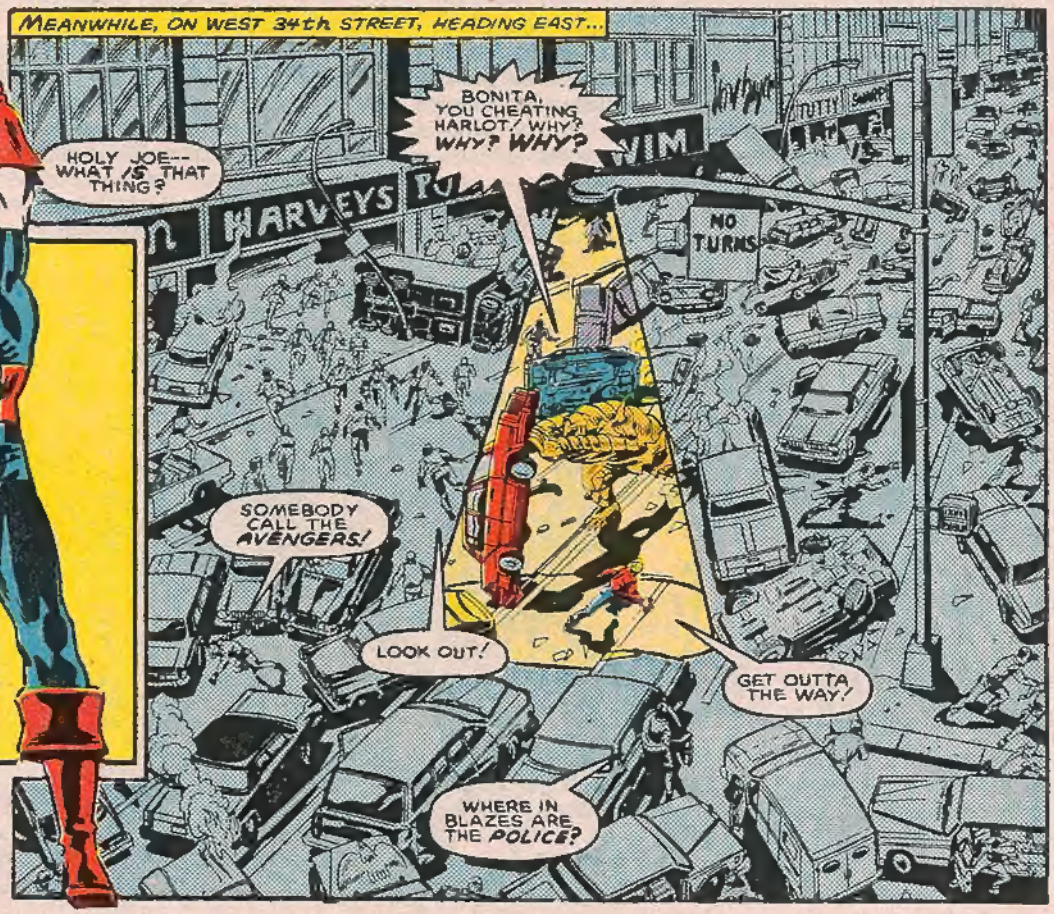
☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION** (Limited Series) #6—From Gardner to Howard The Duck, all your favorite heroes and villains histories, powers, stats and more! Featuring illustrations by your favorite comic book artists all inked by Joe Rubinstein. Cover penciled by John Byrne and inked by Joe Rubinstein. Researched and written by Mark Gruenwald and Peter Sanderson. 64 pages. Mando paper. $1.25.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #123—A prophecy is fulfilled! But is Conan the savior foretold? "There Will Come a Dark Stranger" is written by Don Kraar and drawn by Gary Kwapisz. A Marvel Magazine. $1.50.

☐ **THE ONE** (Limited Series) #5—Superiors clash in the skies and tunnels of New York City. Written and drawn by Rick Veitch. An Epic Comic. For Mature Readers. Baxter paper. Direct Sales only. $1.50.

Titles Shipping January 21.
On Sale February 11.

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #38—Marvel's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration continues here, with our spotlight on the


MEANWHILE, ON WEST 34th STREET, HEADING EAST...
BONITA, YOU CHEATING HARLOT! WHY? WHY? WHY?
HOLY JOE-- WHAT IS THAT THING?
HARVEYS
NO TURNS
SOMEBODY CALL THE AVENGERS!
LOOK OUT!
GET OUTTA THE WAY!
WHERE IN BLAZES ARE THE POLICE?

new Star Comics **HE-MAN** series! Plus: the story behind **X-MEN** artists **John Romita Jr.** and **Dan Green**. All this and much more await you, for only 35¢. Cheap.

☐ **THE AVENGERS** #267—**The Avengers'** arch-foe, **Kang**, returns after nine years! **Wasp**, **Hercules** and **the Black Knight** are zapped into Limbo! "Too Many Kangs" is written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Tom Palmer**. 75¢.

☐ **BALDER THE BRAVE** (Limited Series) #4—**Balder** reveals his astonishing new power in a dynamite battle against the Frost Giants! But what of his relationship with **Karnilla**? This is the last issue of the Limited Series! Do they live happily ever after...in the Marvel Universe? What do *you* think? Written by **Walt Simonson** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **CONAN** #182—The **King of Shem** makes **Conan** his warlord. But the sovereign's gratitude makes a sinister plot to kill **Conan**—a plot involving 10,000 Picts! "Testament" is written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Ernie Chan**. 75¢.

☐ **THE ETERNALS** (Limited Series) #8—Did you get *your* invitation yet? **Sersei's** throwing the ultimate of parties, and everyone's invited! Guess who's planning to crash the bash—and why! Will **Sersi** prove she's the hostess with the mostes' even under combat conditions? Find out in "When Eternals Party" written by **Peter B. Gillis** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **G.I. JOE** #47—**The Joes** fight **Cobra** in an incredible sea battle! Plus: **Storm Shadow** takes on **the Baroness**! It's an ending that will blow you—and one of them—away! Written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Rod Whigham** and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #319—**Bruce Banner** and **Betty Ross** are getting married at last! It's a celebration attended by friends old and new...and one *very* unwelcome guest! Guest-starring: **Doc Samson**, **the Hulkbusters** and **Rick Jones**! "Member of the Wedding" is written and drawn by **John Byrne** with an inking assist by **Keith Williams**. 75¢.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #187—**Kraven the Hunter**...and **the Green Goblin**! How can **Spidey** survive this one? Find out in this classic adventure reprinting **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #47. "In the Hands of the Hunter" is written by **Stan Lee**, penciled by **John Romita Sr.** and inked by **Mike Esposito**. 75¢.

☐ **MUPPET BABIES** #7—**The Muppet Babies** go back in time to find the source of **Fozzie's** sense of humor. But what happens when **Fozzie**, himself, is stranded in the past? "Why is Fozzie Funny?" is written by **Stan Kay** and drawn by **Marie Severin**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **POWER MAN AND IRON FIST** #123—**The Race Killer** is on a rampage! How many more blacks will die before **Power Man** can stop him? And what is the shocking secret behind **the Race Killer's** slayings? Written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled and co-plotted by **Mark Bright** and inked by **Jerry Acerno**. 75¢.

☐ **THE PUNISHER** (Limited Series) #5—The pulse-pounding conclusion to **the Punisher's** war with both **the Mob** and **The Trust**. The odds are ten thousand to one—can even **the Punisher** blast his way out of this mess?! Written by **Steven Grant**, penciled by **Mike Zeck** and inked by **John Beatty**. 75¢.

☐ **SOLOMON KANE** (Limited Series) #5—The puritan fanatic returns to Africa in search of the reason the Dark Continent has such a hold on him. **Kane** reunites with his blood brother, the voodoo man **M'Longa**, to fight unspeakable evil in "The Hills of the Dead." Written by **Ralph Macchio**, penciled by **John Bogdanove** and inked by **Al Williamson**. 75¢.

☐ **X-MEN** #205—Is **Wolverine** still a man, or has amnesia made him a blood-mad beast? **Katie Power** (of **Power Pack**) risks her life to find out! Plus: the incredible origin of **Lady Deathstrike** and the sinister Body Shoppe! "The Wounded Wolf" is written by **Chris Claremont** and guest-drawn by **Barry Windsor-Smith**. 75¢.

☐ **THE MARVEL SAGA** #6—The amazing linear history of the Marvel Universe continues with the origin of X-Factor's **Iceman**, the origin of the Fantastic Four's dread foe, **the Puppet Master** and the origins of **Odin** and Asgard and the first half of **Iron Man's** origin! Plus as an added bonus: The FF's first battle with the Pupper Master! **Thor's** first fight with **the Tomorrow Man** (and his origin, too, 'natch) and last, but not least,

Groo the Wanderer does what comes naturally!

GROO THE WANDERER © 1985 Sergio Aragones. All Rights Reserved.

Balder better be pretty brave to take on the Frost Giants!

Ant Man's battle with the Protector! In addition to art by all the greatest names in comics, there's a new splash page penciled and inked by **Al Milgrom** and a new cover penciled by **Paul Ryan** and inked by **Bob Layton**. Researched and written by **Peter Sanderson**. Mando paper. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #26**—The dramatic conclusion of the Weirdworld trilogy, featuring the elves' final confrontation with **Lord Raven**! "Goblin Spree" is written by **Doug Moench**, penciled by **Pat Broderick** and inked **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. Plus: "Death and the Queen," in which **Captain America** meets—death?! And at Brooklyn's West Indies Day Parade?! Written and drawn by **Will Jungkuntz**. Direct Sales Only. $1.50.

Titles Shipping January 28.
On Sale February 18

☐ **CARE BEARS #4**—There's a new fright in town, and it's the **Scare Bear**! As **the Care Bears** discover, it looks just like them—but does everything they don't! How can they stop him and get children to trust them again? "The Scare Bear!" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **Howard Post** and inked by **Roberta Edelman**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **ELFQUEST #10**—Seeking the origins of his tribe, **Cutter** turns his back on everything and everyone he loves. Plus: the return of the Trolls! "Return to the Holt" written by **Wendy** and **Richard Pini** and drawn by **Wendy Pini**. An Epic Comic. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #290**—**The Fantastic Four** and **Nick Fury** are in a race against time to permanently seal the Negative Zone before **Blastaar** and his merciless hordes can escape into Earth's dimension and before Earth is sucked into the Negative Zone! "Risk!" is written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Al Gordon**. 75¢.

☐ **IRON MAN #206**—While **Tony Stark** launches his first commercial Space Shuttle, the new, evil **Goliath** escapes the **W.C. Avengers** compound and takes his revenge! "Prisons" is written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **Mark Bright** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 75¢.

☐ **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #114**—**Aunt May**—hostage! What will **Spidey** do to save her? "Mayhem!" is written by **Peter David** and drawn by **Bob McLeod**. 75¢.

☐ **SECTAURS #6**—The fabulous secrets of the Hyve or the rescue of an innocent village—what will **Prince Dargon** choose? No matter which path he takes, one thing is certain, the evil **General Spidrax** will win! "Family Reunion" is by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Steve Geiger** and inked by **Keith Williams**. Mando papear. 75¢.

☐ **STAR WARS #105**—Who has captured whom on **Zeltros**? That's what everyone wants to know when three different civilizations invade that world! It's up to **Luke Skywalker** and **the Hoojibs** to save the day. If that weren't enough, **Luke** meets the villainous **Toffs** for the first time! "The Party's Over" is written by **Jo Duffy** and drawn by **Cynthia Martin**. 75¢.

☐ **THOR #367**—The new ruler of Asgard is crowned! You'll never believe who it is (we didn't)! Written and drawn by **Walt Simonson**. 75¢.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS #16**—**The Decepticons** rule the **Transformers**' home world of Cybertron and only a rag-tag band of **Autobots** are left to resist them! If Cybertron is enslaved, can Earth be far behind? Plus: an army of new **Transformers** makes its first appearance! This is one issue that truly is "More Than Meets The Eye!" "The Smelting Pool" is written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Keith Williams**. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **X-FACTOR #4**—How did the members of **X-Factor** get their powers? Find out in this special origin issue written by **Bob Layton** and penciled by **Jackson Guice**. 75¢.

☐ **DOCTOR WHO #20**—A new epic begins: "The Stockbridge Horror" written and penciled by **Steve Parkhouse**, with inking by **Paul Neary**. Plus: the conclusion of "The Outsider" and "The Greatest Gambler." Also, our usual Who Knows info column, and more! Baxter Paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **SAVAGE TALES #4**—America's hardest-hitting comic adventure magazine presents part four of "Sky Warriors" by **Herb Trimpe**, part four of "Blood and Gutz" by **Will Jungkuntz**, part three of "Good Ol' Boys" by **Vincent Waller** and a special story by **John Severin**! A Marvel Magazine. $1.50.

☐ **SIX FROM SIRIUS** (Limited Series) **#4**—The conclusion of the Limited Series finds the control of the Gate into the Fourth Dimension hanging in the balance between **Jakoso Lone** and his greatest enemy, the leader of **the Ghost-Makers**! Written by **Doug Moench** and illustrated by **Paul Gulacy**. An Epic comic. Hudson paper. For Mature Readers. Direct Sales only. $1.50.

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

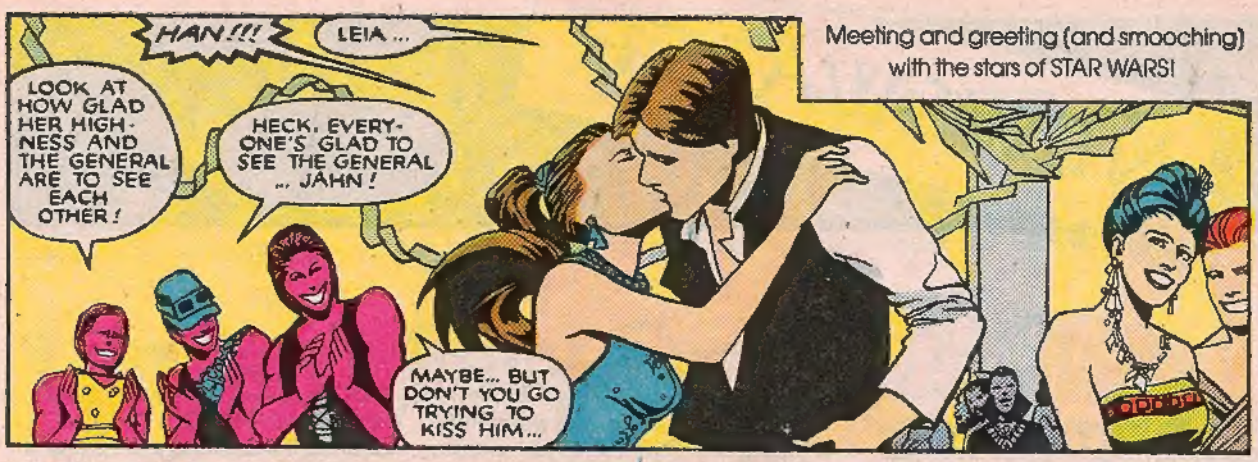
Titles Shipping in February

DAREDEVIL #231—Miller and Mazzucchelli.
FRAGGLE ROCK #7.
MEET MISTY #4—by Robbins.
THE NEW MUTANTS #40—by Claremont, Wilshire and Sienkiewicz.
SANTA CLAUS #3—by Jacobson and Springer.
THE SQUADRON SUPREME #10—"The Dark Within" by Gruenwald, Ryan and de la Rosa.
THE THING #36—(*Final Issue*) by Carlin and Wilson.
THUNDERCATS #4—by Michelinie, Mooney and Breeding.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #15—by Michelinie, Harris and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #9—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
YOUNG ASTRONAUTS #2—by O'Neil, Brigman and Redding.
MOONSHADOW #7—by DeMatteis and Muth.
ALPHA FLIGHT#35—by Mantlo, Mignola and Talaoc.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #318—"Justice is Served" by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
DOCTOR STRANGE #77
FIRESTAR #4—"Now Strikes the Assassin" by DeFalco and Wilshire.
GROO THE WANDERER #16—by Aragones with Evanier.
HEATHCLIFF #8
POWER PACK #23—by L. Simonson, Bogdano and Wiacek.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #277—by DeFalco, Lieber and Rubinstein.
THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH #9—by Englehart, Howell and Springer.
THE MARVEL SAGA #7—Researched and written by Sanderson.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #7—compiled by Olshevsky.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #7—by Gruenwald and Sanderson.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #124—by Yakata and Chan.
THE BOZZ CHRONICLES #3—by Michelinie and Blevins.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #39
THE AVENGERS #268—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN #183—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Chan.
THE ETERNALS #9—By Gillis, S. Buscema and Gordon.
G.I. JOE #48—By Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #320 by Byrne.
MARVEL TALES #188—by Lee and Romita.
X-MEN #206—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
DREADSTAR #24—by Starlin and De la Rosa.
DROIDS #2—by Manak, Romita Sr. and Garzon.
ELFQUEST #11—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #291—by Byrne.
IRON MAN #207—by O'Neil, Bright, Akin and Garvey.
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #115—by David, Beachum and Breeding.
THOR #368—by W. Simonson.
TOP DOG #8
TRANSFORMERS #17—by Budiansky
X-FACTOR #5—by Layton and Guice.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO MARVEL TEAM-UP #4—compiled by Olshevsky.
ALIEN LEGION #13—by Zelenetz, Stroman and Emberlin.
DOCTOR WHO #21

Titles Shipping in March

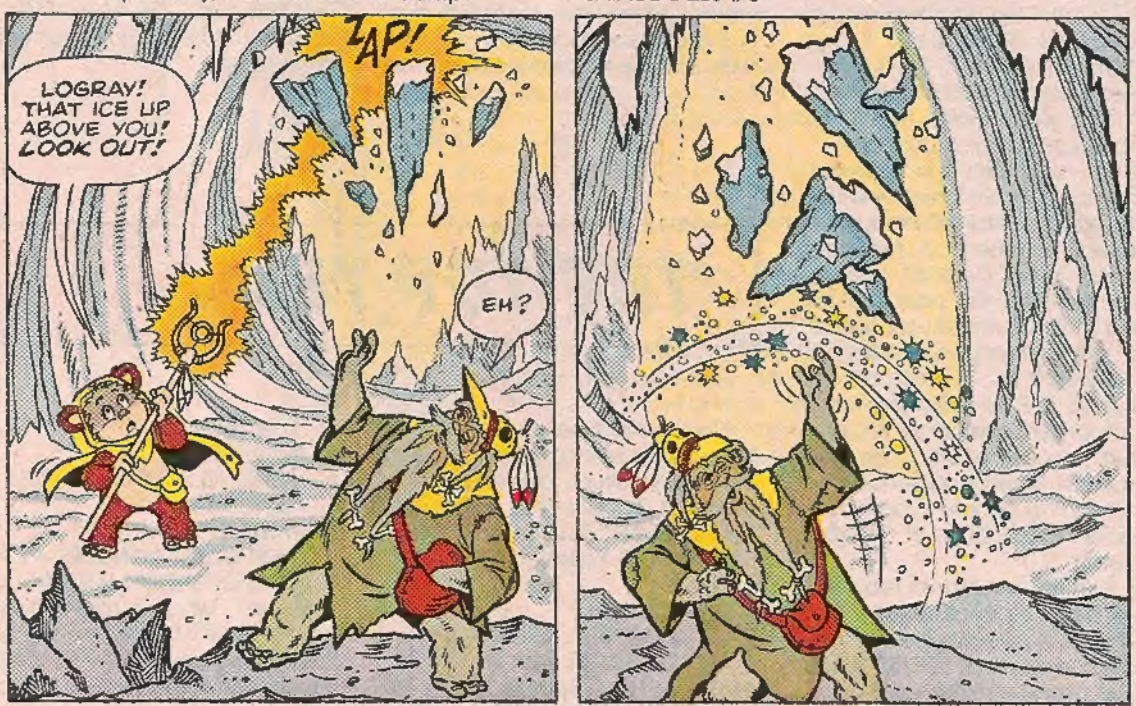
CLOAK AND DAGGER #7—by Mantlo, Leonardi and Austin.
DAREDEVIL #232—by Miller and Mazzucchelli.
HE-MAN #2—by Carlin, Wilson and Guice.
THE NEW MUTANTS #41—by Claremont, Wilshire and Sienkiewicz.
PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #8—by Skeates, Armstrong and DelBeato.

When the going gets rough, Powerman gets going!


HAN!!!
LEIA...
LOOK AT HOW GLAD HER HIGHNESS AND THE GENERAL ARE TO SEE EACH OTHER!
HECK, EVERYONE'S GLAD TO SEE THE GENERAL ... JAHN!
MAYBE... BUT DON'T YOU GO TRYING TO KISS HIM...

Meeting and greeting (and smooching) with the stars of STAR WARS!

THE SQUADRON SUPREME #11—"Betrayal" by Gruenwald and Hall.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #16—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
THE WEST COAST AVENGERS #10—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
CONAN THE KING #35—by Kraar and Docherty.
SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #7—by Mantlo and Isherwood.
ALPHA FLIGHT #36—by Mantlo, Mignola and Talaoc.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #319—"OverKill" by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
EWOKS #8
GROO THE WANDERER #17—by Aragones with Evanier.
POWER PACK #24—by L. Simonson, Bogdanov and Wiacek.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #278—by DeFalco, Frenz and Rubinstein.
THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH #10—by Englehart, Howell and Springer.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #8—compiled by Olshevsky.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #8—by Gruenwald and Sanderson.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #125
THE ONE #6—by Veitch.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #40
THE AVENGERS #269—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN #184—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Camp.
THE ETERNALS #10— by Gillis, S. Buscema and Gordon.
G.I. JOE #49—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #321—by Byrne.
MARVEL TALES #189—by Lee and Romita Sr.
MUPPET BABIES #8
POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #124—by Owsley, Bright and Acerno.
THE SWORD OF SOLOMON KANE #6—by Macchio and Breeding.
X-MEN #207—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
THE MARVEL SAGA #8—researched and written by Sanderson.
MARVEL FANFARE #27
CARE BEARS #5
ELFQUEST #12—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #292—by Byrne.
IRON MAN #208—by O'Neil, Bright, Akin And Garvey.
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #116—by David, Buckler and Breeding.
SECTAURS #7—by Mantlo, Geiger and Williams.
STAR WARS #106—by Duffy, Martin.
THOR #369—by W. Simonson.
TRANSFORMERS #18—by Budiansky.
X-FACTOR #6—by Layton and Guice.
DOCTOR WHO #22
SAVAGE TALES #5



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Logray the Wizard's in trouble in EWOKS!

NEWSWATCH

We interrupt our regularly scheduled MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE to bring you this edition of Newswatch!

ITEM! Big changes at Epic always mean big things! And this time there is so much going on, it's hard to know where to begin! First, let's all give a hearty hello to new Assistant Editor **Dan Chichester** who comes to Epic by way of Connecticut. He'll be working closely with **Jo Duffy** and **Margaret Clark** on a wide variety of projects. **Dan's** a film major at NYU. Epic also has a new Editorial Assistant as well! She's New York native **Evé Freberge**! Not only does **Eve** hail from the Big Apple, but she's rapidly becoming the apple of everybody's eye at Marvel!

Congratulations are in order for **Jo Duffy**, who has been promoted to Managing Editor of the entire Epic line. **Jo** will still closely oversee as Associate Editor such series and projects as DREADSTAR, ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN, ELFQUEST, GROO THE WANDERER, the MARADA GRAPHIC NOVEL and SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS.

Margaret Clark has been promoted as well, and is now the Associate Editor of ALIEN LEGION, THE BOZZ CHRONICLES, MOONSHADOW, THE ONE, SIX FROM SIRIUS II and STEELGRIP STARKEY.

Sheesh, with so much happening, next thing you know, they'll be calling the office Epics Comics!

ITEM! Ten-*hut!* Starting in February, sharp-eyed t.v. watchers will be seeing special Marvel Production animated commercials featuring America's most popular anti-terrorist strike force, **G.I. Joe!** The 30-second spots will not only feature an action-packed sequence, they will also highlight the covers of upcoming G.I. JOE comics! These commercials are yet another example of Marvel's constant efforts to expand the comics reading audience, this time by letting people in on all the excitement and action of G.I. JOE! Dismissed!

ITEM! With Mutant Mania reaching a fever pitch, it's small wonder that X-FACTOR #1 is already the most demanded comic since SECRET WARS II #1! So overwhelming has the demand been, in fact, that we've been forced to hold back one week the shipping of X-FACTOR #1 just so our overworked ordering department can process the mountain of mail it's received from dealers everywhere! We're sorry for the delay, but we couldn't live with ourselves if even one X-Maniac had to walk away from his favorite comics shop disappointed because X-FACTOR #1 was sold out. But don't worry, X-FACTOR #1 is scheduled to ship October 29, and will be on sale before you can say "Jean Grey?!"

ITEM! X-FACTOR is not the only comic that has been re-scheduled because of demand. Marvel Direct Sales Manager (and SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN scripter) **Peter David** just dashed in to tell us that both SIX FROM SIRIUS II #1, the Epic Limited Series written by **Doug Moench** and painted by **Paul Gulacy**, and the blockbuster movie super-special SANTA CLAUS, written by **Sid Jacobson** and drawn by **Frank Springer**, have been rescheduled for the October 29th shipping date as well. Many thanks for the news, Peter, but next time you tell us, don't crawl up the wall, okay?

ITEM! The Sectaurs are a sensation! THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE has cited the Sectaurs toys as one of the likely hits for the coming Christmas season! And if you're already a reader of Marvel's SECTAURS series (by writer **Bill Mantlo**, penciler **Steve Geiger** and inker **Keith Williams**) then you're going to get a big kick out of the in-pack comics included with each Sectaur toy! They're created by Marvel especially for the toys, and are every bit as much fun as the comic itself! Don't miss 'em!

ITEM! Special projects editor **Bob Budiansky** taught a course in comics art last fall at Parsons School of Design that proved to be so popular that he's been asked to teach it again! The class commences in January and will run for twelve 2½ hour evening sessions. Anyone contemplating a future as a Marvel artist (and living in the New York area) can get more information by writing to:

Parsons Midtown Campus
560 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10018
212–741–7576

This has been Newswatch! We now return you to our regularly scheduled magazine!

THE TOP TEN

Wowee! It's time once again for Marvel's Top Ten! It's a listing of the ten best-selling direct sales titles for the month of October, 1985, as provided by our bestest Director of Specialty Sales, Carol B. Kalish.

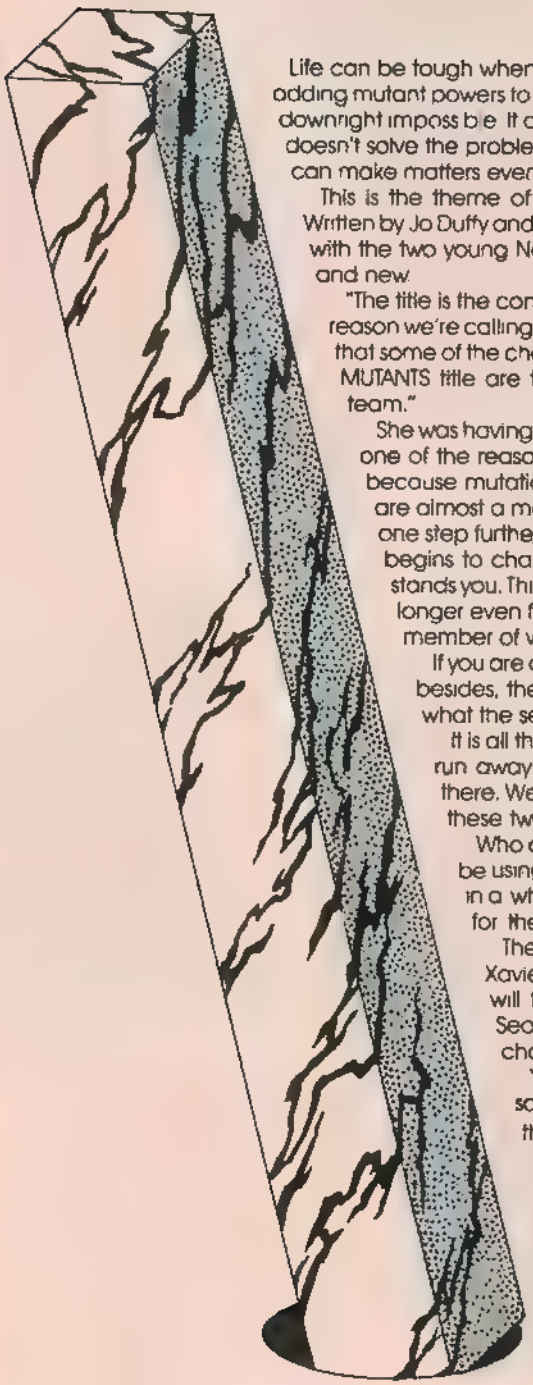
1—X-FACTOR #1
2—X-MEN #202
3—SECRET WARS II #8
4—THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #3
5—NIGHTCRAWLER #4
6—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #273
7—NEW MUTANTS #36
8—FANTASTIC FOUR #287
9—WEST COAST AVENGERS #5
10—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #11

Sheesh! What a mixed bag this month! Team books, mutant books, Spider-books, even MARVEL UNIVERSE! Sounds like variety really is the spice of life! —*A.P.*

X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 1 "The Next Step in News Evolution" NUMBER 8

Life Isn't Easy For THE MISFITS™



Life can be tough when you're a teenager. Complicate matters further by adding mutant powers to an already confusing time of life and things can get downright impossible. It can make you feel like a real misfit. But running away doesn't solve the problem, as Sunspot and Warlock are finding out. In fact, it can make matters even worse.

This is the theme of Marvel's new upcoming Limited Series, THE MISFITS. Written by Jo Duffy and drawn by Kerry Gammill, the four-issue adventure starts with the two young New Mutants and quickly involves other misfits, both old and new.

"The title is the concept," explained Jo. "It's a book about mutants, and the reason we're calling it THE MISFITS is because of the idea for the series. I noticed that some of the characters that appealed to me the most in the existing NEW MUTANTS title are the characters who don't really seem to belong on the team."

She was having fun with the plotting of this idea when another one hit her. "If one of the reasons that mutants are such a popular idea with teenagers is because mutations—especially the way Marvel handles them creatively—are almost a metaphor for adolescence, then I wanted to explore that area one step further. When you suddenly hit an age like 12, 13, or 14 and your body begins to change strangely on you, you're convinced that nobody understands you. This has never happened to anybody else before, you think. You no longer even feel like you're part of the same species you thought you were a member of when you were growing up."

If you are of the right age to have these kind of feelings, and you're a mutant besides, then you have the makings, psychologically, of a real misfit. "That's what the series is all about," said Jo.

It is all this that takes us back to Sunspot and Warlock, who have decided to run away from home because they're convinced they don't really belong there. We'll visit with the rest of the New Mutants, too, but the story focuses on these two in particular.

Who are the Misfits? "In addition to Sunspot and Warlock, we're going to be using some of Marvel's teenage characters who haven't seen some play in a while. And we'll also be creating a few new characters especially for the series," said Jo.

The old X-Men villain, the Vanisher, sets himself up as a sort of Professor Xavier for runaway mutants. "A Fagan almost," explained Jo. The Misfits will form around him, and include Maddrox, the Multiple Man and Siryn, Sean Cassidy's (Banshee) daughter. "And we're introducing two new characters, both female, called Chance and Ariel," she said.

"The series will be small on established villains," said Jo. "We'll be using some New York-type muggers and thieves, and the Vanisher, even though a member of the team, is quite a villain himself. But the main

villains for the series is Ariel's people.'

Ariel, you see, is not a human being. She's part of a race that isn't really human, and she starts out as a villain. But she is a misfit among her own kind, although she doesn't realize it, and winds up as a member of the team.

Jo is no stranger to the work of Kerry Gammill. "I love working with Kerry. We did about 25 issues of POWER MAN AND IRON FIST some years back and he's one of my favorite artists. I felt he was the right choice for this series and I always like working with him."

"Although I don't think I write the way Chris Claremont does, I really enjoy a lot of what he does with the New Mutant' characters," said Jo. "I especially enjoyed the series when Bill Sienkiewicz was on it. THE MISFITS is kind of an outgrowth of some of the things they did as throwaways, things they did that were fun and in character for these people. I saw that many of these could be developed into whole stories, so I started toying with the idea. That's where THE MISFITS come from."

"I love Sunspot and Warlock," she said. "They are wonderful characters and I'm glad I was able to borrow them for my story. Maddrox was conceived as a one shot character and nobody has ever made full use of him. I think he has a very neat and very silly power and I could do an entire series on him, let alone with the other characters."

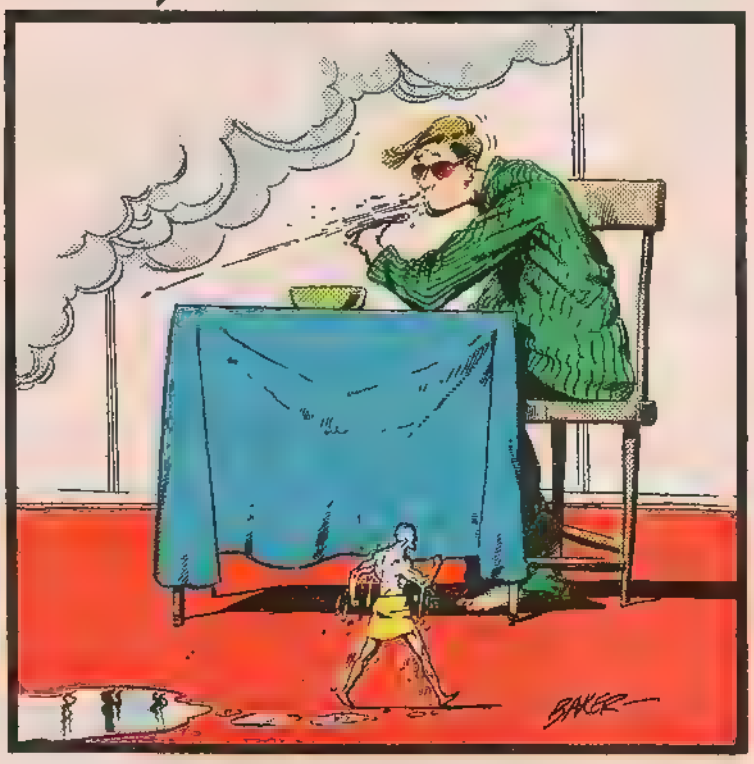
THE MISFITS was conceived as a limited series and there are no plans for it to continue. But, of course, a lot of this decision depends on reader reaction. "To go on longer it will obviously need changes. And I have to give Chris back his characters," said Jo.

"All of these people — Sunspot, Warlock, Maddrox, Siryn, Chance and Ariel — are at the age where they think they are completely grown up," explained Jo. "They're not, of course, but you're never going to convince them of that. It's a very tough age, but a very nice age to be at."

— Bill Slavicsek

It's Genetic

by Kyle Baker



I tell you, Scott—nothing like a good hot shower in the morning!

MARVEL® 25TH ANNIVERSARY

It started in November 1961. The story you've heard so often: **Reed Richards**, scientist and **Ben Grimm**, test pilot, accompanied by Reed's fiance **Sue Storm** and her kid brother **Johnny**, took a risky flight into space — and were changed by cosmic radiation into the colorful quartet known as **the Fantastic Four**. Another story, you may have only heard a time or two: **Martin Goodman**, publisher of a small line of comics featuring mostly monster stories, teenage humor and westerns, told his editor to get moving on a super hero series. The editor wanted to do something more challenging than had been done in super hero comics heretofore, and he and this small company's major artist put their heads together, soon coming up with a new magazine called THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

Judging from what's happened since, the idea was a good one. The new magazine hung on in a market dominated by much larger companies. By May 1962, a second title was added to the fledgling adventure line. This was THE INCREDIBLE HULK, and though the original series lasted only six issues, the character is very clearly still with us today. Also in May 1962, in the fourth issue of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, **the Sub-Mariner** *returned* (having been originally created back when Marvel, known as Timely Comics, was first publishing super hero material, in the World War II era), and stayed around to shake things up.

The summer and fall of 1962 were good ones for Marvel, introducing four more series. July saw the beginning of **the Ant-Man** series in TALES TO ASTONISH, which had been a monster/fantasy series until then (Ant-Man first appeared in his **Henry Pym** identity in January, and adopted a costume and became an adventure hero in July). In August, JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY switched over from tales of earth-threatening monsters with names like Spragg to stories about a blond-tressed Thunder God who went by the name of **Thor**. Two months later, another "mystery" magazine switched emphasis, as **the Human Torch**, regularly seen in THE FANTASTIC FOUR, got a solo series in STRANGE TALES, where he was soon joined by his FF-partner, **the Thing**.

It was between that first Thor adventure and the Human Torch

going solo that, in the last issue of yet another mystery/fantasy/monster series, AMAZING FANTASY, **Stan Lee** and **Steve Ditko** introduced a young man who gains incredible powers and learns of the great responsibility they bring. They called the character **Spider-Man**, cancelled the magazine, and promptly forgot about it. Who would buy a hero based on *spiders*, after all?

Plenty of people, as it turned out — and spurred on by the sales figures, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN joined the Marvel line as a regular title six months later, in March 1963. Stan and the Marvel artists knew they were on a roll by that time, and things were popping. The same month that Spidey debuted in his own book, TALES OF SUSPENSE moved its mystery stories to the back of the magazine, and the **Iron Man** series began. In May, Marvel experimented with a new kind of war series, with an emphasis on the action-packed stories and character concerns that were becoming the Marvel hallmark, and SGT FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS began fighting World War II. And two months later, **Doctor Strange** joined the Human Torch in STRANGE TALES, initiating the concept of the "split-book," a magazine housing two separate, equally-important series.

It was in September of that year that Stan Lee and Jack Kirby unleashed a double-barrelled blast that had a major effect on the Marvel Universe as it exists today. The first title was THE AVENGERS, and though there had been characters from one series appearing in another before (most notably between FANTASTIC FOUR and STRANGE TALES), this was the first full-scale joining of Marvel's series into one coherent whole. The other series? THE X-MEN, which introduced the concept of *mutants* and humanity's fear of them—a concept that has run through almost all of Marvel's titles, underscoring the idea that all the stories happen in the same world.

Captain America became the second major survivor of the Timely era when he thawed out of suspended animation and joined **the Avengers** in their fourth issue (and joined Iron Man in TALES OF SUSPENSE, making it the second split-book, in October). **Daredevil** premiered full-blown in his own regular series in April 1964, **the Hulk** rounded out the third split-book in July as he joined **Giant-Man** (formerly Ant-Man, later to be Goliath, **Yellowjacket**, and still later plain Hank Pym again—though he and **the Wasp** were to be bumped from the pages of ASTONISH by the Sub-Mariner long before *any* of this happened) in TALES TO ASTONISH, and in August of 1965, the Human Torch and the Thing vacated their STRANGE TALES slot in favor of a series chronicling the modern-day adventures of the leader of **the Howling Commandos** — except that by '65, **Nick Fury** was a colonel, and leading the hi-tech forces of the espionage group called S.H.I.E.L.D."

NEVER HAVE YOU KNOWN HIS LIKE!
IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE AND PRIVILEGE FOR THE EDITORS OF STRANGE TALES
FANFARE,
THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES, BASED UPON A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUPER HERO--
DR. STRANGE
MASTER OF
BLACK MAGIC!

And with the start of the S.H.I.E.L.D. series, the ten titles that are generally considered to have formed the classic Marvel Universe were complete. Oh sure, there were plenty more — but it's these ten that carry the range of interlocking concepts—from cosmic adventure to global espionage to inter-dimensional mysticism—that made the world wake up and see just what comics could be! With the Marvel Universe chugging along at full steam, it wasn't long before THE AMAZ

. . .

"and if you don't know what *those* letters stand for -turn in your complete set of THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE right now!

ING SPIDER-MAN was comicdom's best-selling title, before names like Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko were being bandied about TV talk shows and college campuses, and before the word Marvel, for hundreds of thousands of people, became a guarantee of the best in comics literature.

Today, it's 1986—twenty-five years since the Fantastic Four first took off to explore the unknown...and it's time to celebrate. We've got lots of plans to make 1986 a year long party—and we're inviting everyone! What are we gonna do? Well, for starters, FANTASTIC FOUR #296, which marks the official 25th anniversary of Marvel, will be...not a normal-length, not a double-length, but a *triple*-length spectacular that brings the FF back to their beginnings --and features a wild party with an unbelievable guest-list!

Five years ago, when **John Byrne** wrote and drew the FF's 20th anniversary story, "Terror In A Tiny Town," he described working on it as doing "Fantastic Four --the Movie." This one, he tells us, will be more like "Fantastic Four—the Comic Book. This is going to be sort of the ultimate comic book version of the FF, because it will be tying into so many things that relate to earlier stuff. The whole thrust of FF #236, the 20th anniversary story, was to do a story that was more or less completely divorced from the regular book, so that it could sort of stand on its own as a "movie." If you'd never heard of these guys before, you could come in on this and pick up everything you needed to know. In the 25th anniversary issue, I'm going to be doing essentially the same thing, in that you'll be able to pick up on these guys even if you've never seen them before, but I also want to fill it up with all kinds of little, almost subliminal, fannish type stuff that people will recognize as being references to earlier stories."

So what's going to happen? John was willing to give out a few details. "The title is 'Return to Monster Island.' The basic premise is that Reed and Sue and Johnny and She-Hulk are out in California—as a result of stuff that's happening in the previous issues—and they go out to the old rocket base out in Central City. It's all grown over with weeds and looking pretty scraggy, the way Cape Canaveral is these days. The first part of the issue, as it now stands, will be a retelling of FANTASTIC FOUR #1, as they tell their origin to She-Hulk—their first battle with **the Mole Man** and all that stuff." But the Fantastic Four, being the Fantastic Four, aren't known for having peaceful times, and sure enough, they quickly are caught up in an adventure, as the world is ravaged by

globe-spanning earthquakes—earthquakes that Reed Richards manages to track back to...Monster Island? But as far as they know, the Mole Man blew Monster Island up at the end of FF #1.

"So they go tripping off to Monster Island, or where it used to be, and discover that what is now there is basically a very large hole—into which sea water has been pouring for years. It's been gushing down into the tunnels that the Mole Man appropriated from the Deviants and has managed in many cases to work its way quite a ways down into the vicinities of the center of the Earth—as a result of which, it's coming back up as super-heated steam, which is causing vast pressures to build up underneath the crust of the Earth—which is what's causing all of these giant earthquakes, globally."

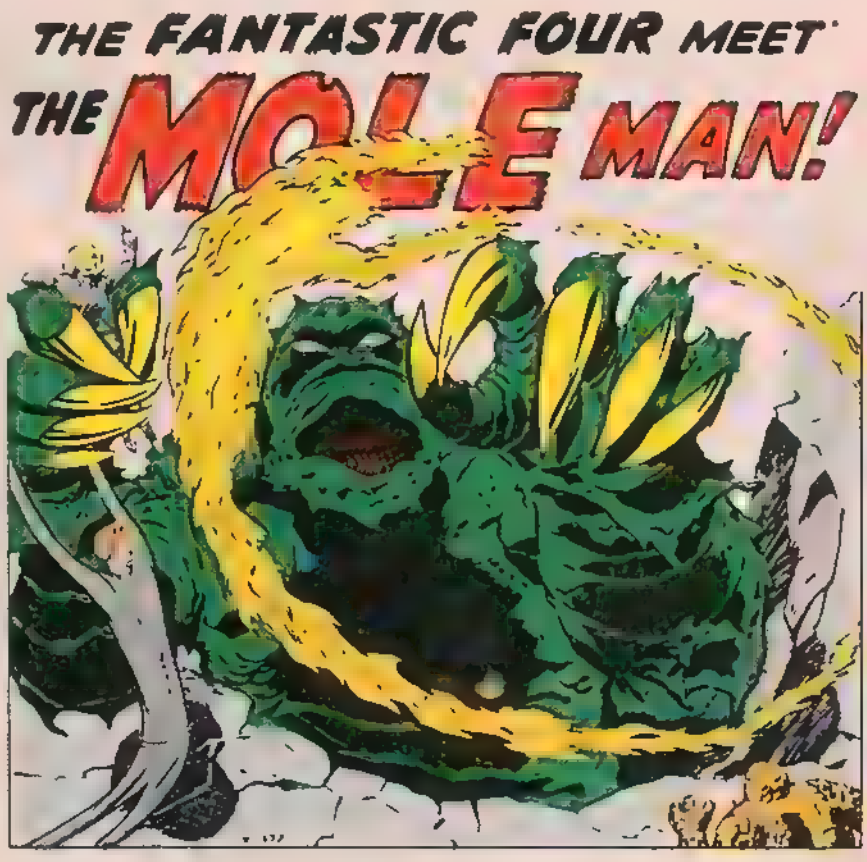
"They are about to do what they can to undo this damage, when...the Mole Man turns up. He's still there, still lurking around, and he's got all kinds of things happening involving that group of outcasts that he put together. And what he's found is...one of the last dangling things that I felt I had to address from #1 was the Valley of Diamonds. The Mole Man has discovered that the Valley of Diamonds is not in fact a natural phenomenon. The diamonds are mystical. And he's discovered that if he melts down the diamonds he gets this glop, which, if you immerse yourself in it, you are transformed into whatever you are in your heart of hearts."

What follows is a bizarre, multi-leveled conflict involving the FF, who are trying to save the world, the Mole Man, who is trying to help his people, and who's sure the FF have come to screw things up...and another character, one "who's been missing for a while."

"The Thing has returned to Monster Island." By this time, the Thing will have undergone drastic changes, the nature of which we dare not reveal, and he's decided that "Monster Island is the only place for a monster like him." Big developments are in store for the Thing, including his long-awaited reunion with the FF, and a look into his inner self, as the Thing faces just what he really is in his "heart of hearts." As the Fantastic Four try to deal with a world threatened by earthquakes, the return of the Thing, the menace of the Mole Man and the desperate need to get the Mole Man's outcasts off what's left of Monster Island before it completely explodes, well...you didn't think we were going to tell you *everything*, did you? Suffice it to say that there *is* a resolution, one that doesn't involve the destruction of Earth and everything on it (that'll come in a future issue, maybe), and the single most dramatic development ever in the life of the Mole Man.

And then, John assures us, "we get back to New York for an anniversary party! It's kind of a separate story at the end of the issue, which unveils the FF's new headquarters, and has sort of the entire Marvel Universe guest-starring, including (of course) folks from Marvel."

going to be Marvel parties at all the major comics conventions, with all sorts of giveaways—special Marvel *TV commercials* (get your local comics shop owner to check into it...he'll be glad he did!)—the Fantastic Four, live and in person, making apperances at conventions, comics stores, and elsewhere—a special 25th anniversary logo on all our books (designed by MARVEL AGE's own Jim Salicrup)—and tributes to



So what does the future hold for Marvel's flagship title? "Well, with the return of the Thing, we will have to address the very serious question of whether they will be the Fantastic Four or the Fantastic *Five*. The 'Get the She-Hulk out of here' mail has dropped off almost to nothing, and has been replaced by 'What are you going to do with the She-Hulk once the Thing comes back' mail. There are definite contingents out there that seem to want both of them. Whether we will actually go that far, I don't know, but it will certainly be the issue we're addressing in #297. Somewhere in here, I'm probably going to have to finish up 'The Last Galactus Story,' now that EPIC ILLUSTRATED's been cancelled. And then we've got, at least at this point, matrimonial plans for #300. Whether those will actually come to pass, I don't know."

And what about the rest of Marvel's anniversary year? Well, we're still feverishly planning it out, but there are

Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and all the other comics greats without whom there never would have been a Marvel Universe!

And there's more. We can't reveal any specifics yet, but it will be the single biggest thing to happen to Marvel Comics since November 1961...and it's happening in 1986! Sound like a tall order? Sound impossible? Trust us. There are going to be ten all new titles, ten new series that will have as big an effect on Marvel as those ten original titles that formed the Marvel Universe itself!

We hate to do this to you, but we've got to stop here. For more news on Marvel's 25th anniversary celebration, and on the New Ten...just keep watching MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. We promise to tell you everything...just as soon as we're allowed to! In the meantime, we're glad you could make it to the party—and we hope you have a great year!

Kurt Busiek

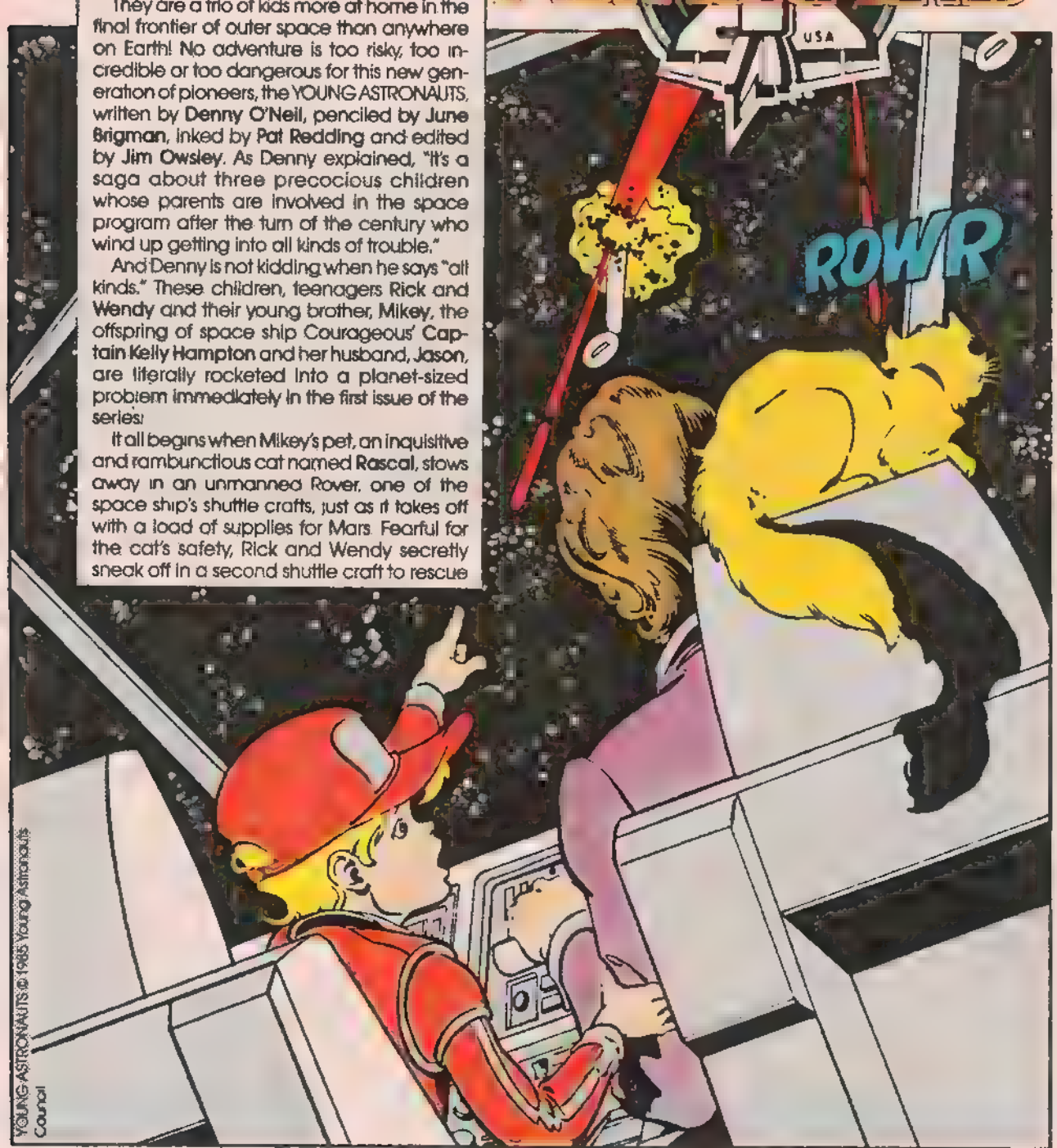
STAR SPOTLIGHT

Blast off with the YOUNG ASTRONAUTS™

They are a trio of kids more at home in the final frontier of outer space than anywhere on Earth! No adventure is too risky, too incredible or too dangerous for this new generation of pioneers, the YOUNG ASTRONAUTS, written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **June Brigman**, inked by **Pat Redding** and edited by **Jim Owsley**. As Denny explained, "It's a saga about three precocious children whose parents are involved in the space program after the turn of the century who wind up getting into all kinds of trouble."

And Denny is not kidding when he says "all kinds." These children, teenagers **Rick** and **Wendy** and their young brother, **Mikey**, the offspring of space ship Courageous' Captain **Kelly Hampton** and her husband, **Jason**, are literally rocketed into a planet-sized problem immediately in the first issue of the series!

It all begins when Mikey's pet, an inquisitive and rambunctious cat named **Rascal**, stows away in an unmanned Rover, one of the space ship's shuttle crafts, just as it takes off with a load of supplies for Mars. Fearful for the cat's safety, Rick and Wendy secretly sneak off in a second shuttle craft to rescue



YOUNG ASTRONAUTS © 1985 Young Astronauts Council

the cat before the oxygen supply in the Rover gives out, only to discover, too late, that their shuttle's automatic pilot has been removed for repairs! Worried about his brother and sister and also feeling responsible for getting them into their fix, Mikey impetuously hijacks a third shuttle! Together with **Retro**, a maintenance droid, he blasts off to Mars in a desperate hope to avert disaster. And that's when the adventure **really** takes off!

Young Astronauts began as an educational program in the school system to teach kids about space. Sharp-eyed readers will remember seeing Young Astronauts ads in many of the Marvel and Star comics. Marvel's animation studio, Marvel Productions, became tremendously excited about the program and quickly secured the rights to develop an animated series based on the program, which also dealt with the projection of what it will be like to live and travel in space in the next century. It didn't take long after animation work started that everyone agreed that another great way to introduce kids to a whole new universe — the **real** universe—was to also produce a comic book.

The rest, as they are now starting to say, is the future!

It is this premise of life in space and space travel in the 21st century that makes the whole project so exciting for everyone.

"My first reaction to YOUNG ASTRONAUTS was that it reminded me of [science fiction author] **Robert Heinlein's** work," Denny said. "His books were my first exposure to science fiction. He had a way of taking believable people and putting them into unusual, but still very believable, situations."

"YOUNG ASTRONAUTS has the same kind of charm as his stories," Denny continued. "Even in my advanced age, I can still get excited about the idea of going to other planets, about exploring the solar system, about establishing space colonies and all of that. Space is a tremendously exciting thing—mankind's last great frontier. And what we're hoping to communicate to the readers is the excitement we feel."

Initially, the Star Comic will be adapting YOUNG ASTRONAUTS animation scripts. With them, Editor **Jim Owsley** said, "Denny is being a genius." Jim went on to explain that even though the two media of animation and comics have many similarities, at the same time "there are vast gulfs between them," he was quick to emphasize. "It's a very complicated process, taking something like this and making it a comic. And Denny makes it look easy. He's taking the best of the screenplays and putting them into the comic."

Because YOUNG ASTRONAUTS is going to present as realistic a picture of life in space as possible, technology will play an important role in the stories. "Obviously it has to," Denny said, "because we can't live in space without it. But these won't be 'gadget stories.'"

Penciling the series is the acclaimed artist who got her big break in comics by penciling another series about special children in unusual situations, June Brigman. The series, of course, was POWER PACK.

"I think that June is perfect for the comic," Denny said. "I've wanted to work with her ever since I first saw her art on POWER PACK. Her style has a simplicity and a charm which I think just exactly fits the project. She really catches the feel of animation art which is what we want."

The inker for YOUNG ASTRONAUTS is someone who has been with Marvel for only a short time, but who has already shown she is more than just Editor **Larry Hama's** indispensable assistant by tackling such challenges as the inking of a SPIDER-MAN annual, issues of MICRONAUTS, DAREDEVIL and other Marvel super hero stories. That person, of course, is Pat Redding, and YOUNG ASTRONAUTS is special to her not only because it is an exciting series, but also because it is her first regular series.

"I wanted to ink YOUNG ASTRONAUTS because it was a nice looking book and I was never offered a series before...and it was great!" Pat laughed. "I think the comic book should look as close to the TV cartoon as possible, because if it doesn't, what's the purpose? Kids don't like it when different formats of the same project don't match. I remember I didn't when I was growing up. And kids pay more attention to details than most adults do. So I feel that I should make the comic look as consistent as possible—and make it look good, too!"

"I think June's and Pat's work complement each other amazingly well," Jim said. "With the first issue of anything usually the creators are feeling their way around each other and trying to find their niche. There is a certain amount of that that went on in the first issue, but not much. I was surprised at how well this whole thing worked. I really like the look of YOUNG ASTRONAUTS."

One good reason that helped things mesh so quickly was the quality of the animation scripts. As Denny, a science buff himself, noted, "One of the things I responded to was how well they [the animation people] solved technical problems, like the problem of getting from one point to the other in a space ship during zero gravity. Their solution was to have everyone wear shoes with velcro soles and have the ship lined with velcro strips. It's touches like that which I think are not only neat, but also which make the story that much more believable."

Another point that Denny thought was exceptional was what the Marvel Production people did with one of the major supporting characters, the maintenance droid, Retro. "When I first saw it, I thought, "Oh, another **R2-D2**,'" Denny said. "But that robot is a robot with a difference. There is more to that little critter than meets the eye."

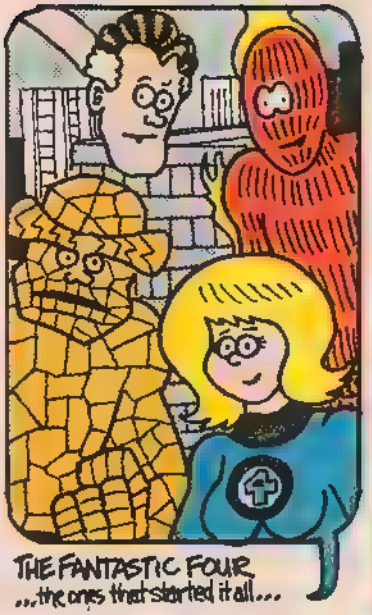
YOUNG ASTRONAUTS promises to be a series full of surprises, on top of being one jam-packed with wild adventure and technology just a computer-calculation away. As Jim observed, "YOUNG ASTRONAUTS has all the action and adventure of STAR WARS and all the humanity of SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON." With a combination like that, YOUNG ASTRONAUTS can't help but be a hit!

—Dwight Jon Zimmerman

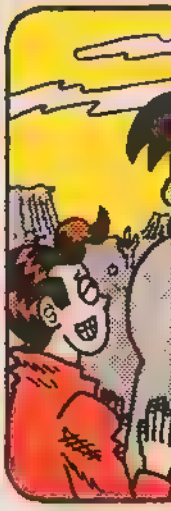
FRED HEMBECK KICKS OFF THE YEAR LONG CELEBRATION OF MARVEL'S 25th ANNIVERSARY WITH A SALUTE TO THE ONE ARTIST WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS HELPED DEFINE THE SCOPE AND GRANDEUR OF THIS THING CALLED THE MARVEL UNIVERSE MORE THAN ANY OTHER--YES, FOLKS, I'M TALKING ABOUT THE ONE, THE ONLY--

JACK KIRBY

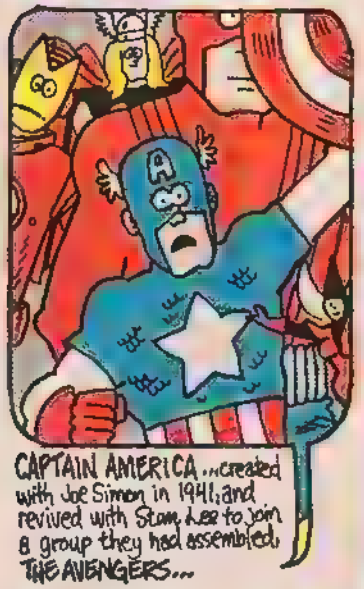
SOME OF YOU YOUNG FOLKS MAY NOT BE AS AWARE OF JACK'S ROLE IN LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE AS YOU ARE OF THOSE OF THE EQUALLY IMPORTANT Stan Lee (MARVEL'S EDITOR AND CHIEF WRITER WAY BACK WHEN, AND NOW PUBLISHER AND ALL AROUND MEDIA MAVEN). BUT YOU SHOULD BE PROPERLY AWESTRUCK WHEN YOU TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT THE MULTI-TALENTED MR. KIRBY HAD A HAND IN THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERS AS WELL AS GRACING THEIR INITIAL OUTINGS WITH HIS POWERFUL CARTOONING, SETTING A STYLE WHOSE INFLUENCE CAN STILL BE SEEN WITHIN THE PAGES OF TODAY'S MARVEL COMICS. DRUM ROLL, PLEASE:



THE FANTASTIC FOUR ...the ones that started it all...



THE HULK and F ..tho whose idea him grey in his f remains a mystery

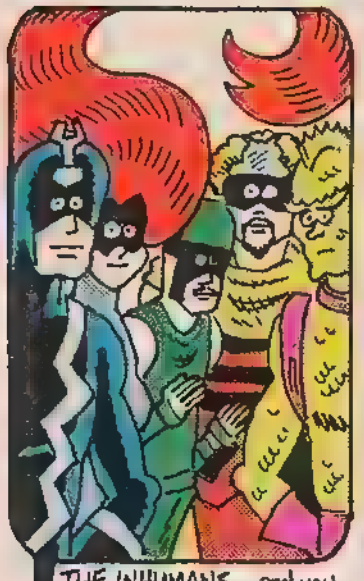


CAPTAIN AMERICA ...created with Joe Simon in 1941, and revived with Stan Lee to join a group they had assembled, THE AVENGERS...

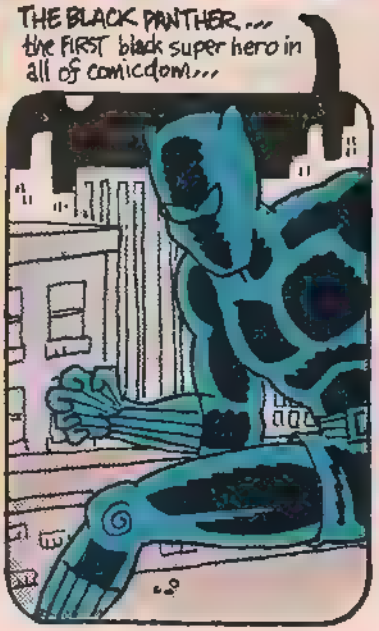
SGT. FURY & HIS HOWLING COMMANDOES/NICK FURY, AGENT of S.H.I.E.L.D.... a character so exciting, he was created twice!..

THE X-MEN ... or, as you young 'uns know 'em, X-FACTOR...

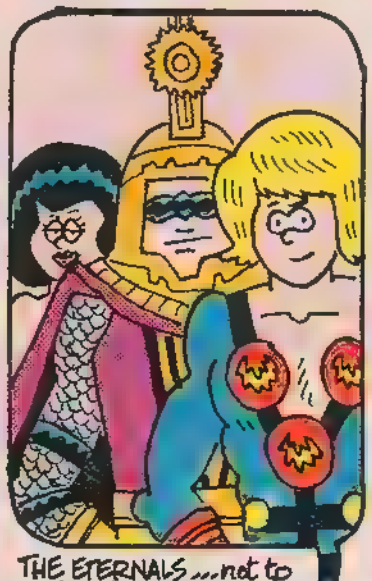
MAGNETO, & the SCARL First family



THE INHUMANS ... and you thought your family was peculiar!...



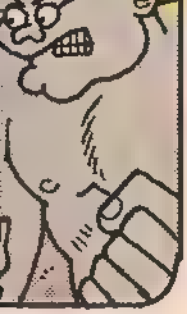
THE BLACK PANTHER ... the FIRST black super hero in all of comicdom...



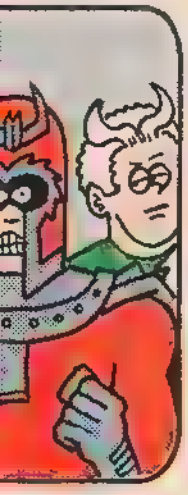
THE ETERNALS ... not to mention the DEVIANTS and the CELESTIALS...

MACHINE MAN with the heart of

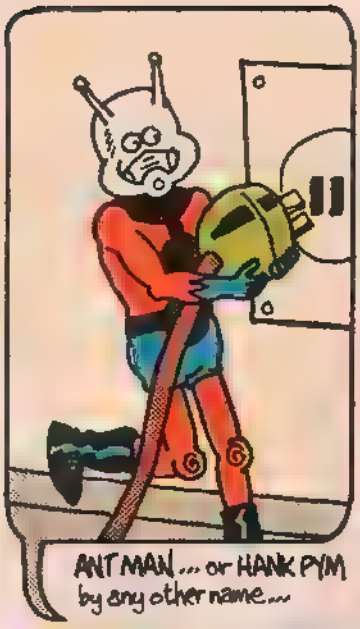
RICK JONES
it was to color
ast appearance
...



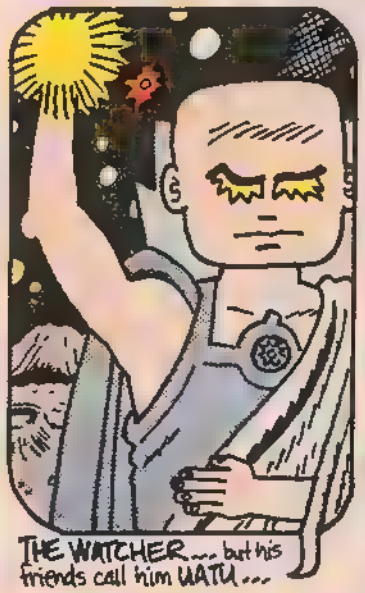
QUICKSILVER
ET WITCH ... the
of ex-evil mutants...



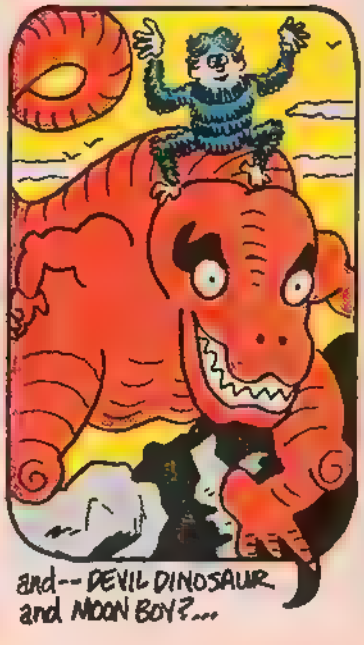
...the robot
gold...



ANT MAN ... or HANK PYM
by any other name...



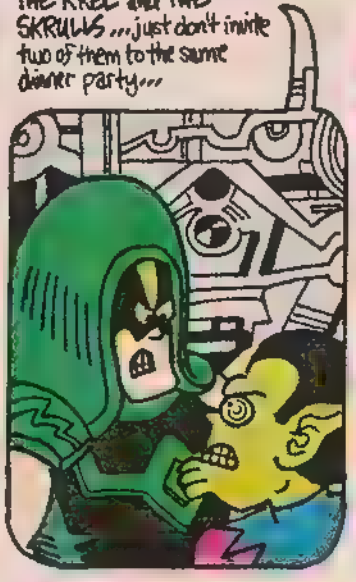
THE WATCHER ... but his
friends call him UATU ...



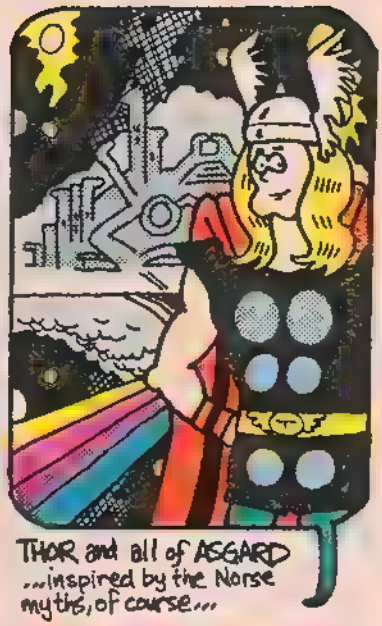
and -- DEVIL DINOSAUR
and MOON BOY? ...

DR. DOOM ... Marvel's
baddest bad guy ...

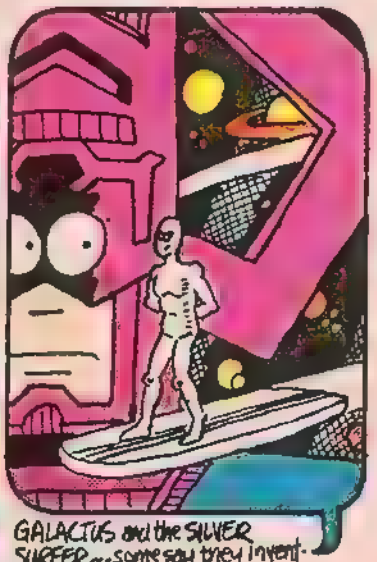
THE KREE and THE
SKRULLS ... just don't invite
two of them to the same
dinner party ...



OKAY, OKAY -- SO EVEN SOMEONE AS TALENTED AS JACK HAS HIS OFF DAYS. JUST REMEMBER THAT EVEN DWIGHT GOODEN DOESN'T WIN EVERY BASEBALL GAME HE PITCHES. IT'S THE WINNING PERCENTAGE THAT'S IMPORTANT, AND JACK'S PROBABLY BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH MORE WINNERS THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE HISTORY OF COMICS, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF Stan Lee. THE MAN WHO CO-CREATED ALL THE CHARACTERS PARADED HERE BEFORE YOU (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CAPTAIN AMERICA, AS NOTED, AS WELL AS THE LAST THREE LISTED, WHICH WERE SOLELY THE RESULT OF THE KIRBY MUSE).



THOR and all of ASGARD
... inspired by the Norse
myths, of course ...



GALACTUS and the SILVER
SURFER ... some say they invented "cosmic" ...

IT WAS THAT SAME Stan Lee WHO RECOGNIZED THE BRILLIANCE OF HIS PARTNER-IN-GREATNESS'S WORK EARLY ON IN THE DAWNING DAYS OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, DUBBING HIM THE

KING

A SOBRIQUET AS APPROPRIATE NOW AS IT WAS THEN. JACK "KING" KIRBY, A TRUE MARVEL COMICS LEGEND, HAS BEEN SALUTED BY FRED "COMMONER" HEMBECK, JUST ANOTHER MARVEL COMICS EMPLOYEE, WHO KNOWS GREATNESS WHEN HE SEES IT. 'NUFF SAID!

As Marvel's 25th anniversary celebrations get under way this year, we're doing a lot of special stories in our comics, in part our way of thanking you for helping to make us what we are today, and to kick off the *next* twenty-five years with as much enthusiasm and commitment to quality as we've had for the first twenty-five. But, of course, a celebration like this is also a good time for a look back at what we've achieved over the years. Some of our series are indulging in a little heartfelt nostalgia (like the special reprinting of AMAZING FANTASY #15 in the January issue of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN), and MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE is no exception.

A few months ago, in the letters page, we asked Marvel fans to write in and tell us what their favorite Marvel story of all time was—and more than just naming it, we asked you to include a few words on *why* you thought the story was so good. We got a flood of responses—some long, some short, some involved, some simple and direct—but the one thing they had in common was that they were all heartfelt. As might be expected, the selections varied quite a bit—from comics published way back when Marvel was young to comics that came out just recently. So what got picked? Well, we'll let the letters speak for themselves.

"I think my favorite comic story ever would be X-MEN #137, 'The Fate Of The Phoenix.' This is my favorite story because **Jean Grey** was one of my favorite characters in the Marvel Universe. Her fantastic fate shocked me. The issues leading up to #137 were great, but the final issue of the Phoenix Saga was absolutely fantastic."

—Mark Rifkin
East Windsor NJ

"My favorite comic was DAREDEVIL #181, with the death of **Elektra**. I've been collecting DAREDEVIL for months now, digging through piles of back issues, and it's the

THE GREATEST STORIES WE EVER TOLD

best I've found yet because it had a great plot and lots of action."

—Alan Jacobson
Binghamton, NY

"My favorite story is 'Manslaughter' in THE NEW DEFENDERS #134. I would say that it was the best story I have ever read.
Isaac/Gargoyle—gets zapped to someplace.
Valkyrie—gets killed by her own blade.
Angel—gets killed by nerve gas.
Cloud—got stabbed through the neck.
Iceman—neck broken.
Beast—did not even get hurt.
And that's why I like this story."

—Eric Weber
Bandera, TX

"I have completed a never-ending search through all of my comics, graphic novels, and special editions. Of them all, I have found not one, but two stories which I call my favorite stories.

The first story is THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL by **Jim Starlin**. This story best exemplified human courage and undying hope

The second story is THE SILVER SURFER by **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby**. This story showed that love is the one force in the universe that we must accept to help us live up to our potential.

I'm sorry to say that I couldn't narrow down my choice to one story, but I felt that these were truly the best fictional stories I've ever read."

—Peter Krieger

"My vote is for FANTASTIC FOUR #236, 'Terror In A Tiny Town.' The reason: The plot held me spellbound for nearly an hour. It had a great plot with numerous plot twists, the dialogue was perfect, the art was terrific, and even the lettering and coloring were perfect. In short, it was everything a comic book can be."

—Lanny Tucker
Greensburg, KY

"My favorite Marvel Comic is probably FANTASTIC FOUR #39, and a lot of that's nostalgia, but it's still got a lot to recommend it: Lee and Kirby at one of their mutual peaks during the changeover to wholesale dramatics in the FF, my personal choice of best inking in an FF issue (**Wally Wood** inking **Daredevil** and **Frank Giacoia** inking everything else), the very involving plot about the FF losing their powers and having Doctor Doom take over their headquarters, and that bee-yootiful cover!"

—Dennis Perado

"What's Marvel's best story? This is very hard to say, for I can feel many writers pouring their innermost strength into lots of stories only Marvel would do. I grieved for **Claremont's** Phoenix. I was moved by **Michelinie's** original **Iron Man** alcohol problem. My emotions were wrenched into soul-searing feelings for **De Matteis'** DEFENDERS #110, **Devil-Slayer's** saga. However, never has a story showed how human a super-human is than **Jim Shooter's Micheal/Enemy** Saga, from THE AVENGERS. This is number one. The humor, the suspense. First of all-we were told and shown of incalculable power. Not in an evil sense, but to us it offended. It dared to challenge our heroes, who gave *all* for nothing. I was outraged at **Moondragon's** painful words. I was in constant shock at each death. I emotionally felt all the good I knew die. I hated it all. I loved it so much. Months later the need for such a tale still gripped me, as it does to this day. Put simply: We live on constant failures—so can they. Pick up, don't look back."

—Brian Edinger
Shreveport, LA

"I'd say that my all-time favorite comic was DAREDEVIL #219. It was really nice to see something where he was out of the main storyline, and had a chance to do some real good, and clean up a whole town in just one issue."

—Brook Maughan
New York, NY

"My number 1 Marvel comic is GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #2, for many reasons. I still think of it as **Dave Cockrum's** best art job ever. **Steve Englehart's** re-introduction of **Hawkeye** stands as the best example of how to delineate a character's personality ever, and the death of **the Swordsman** is one of the only deaths in comics to *really* affect me. **Bill Mantlo** also turned in what must be his finest coloring job ever, as well! Besides all that, how could you go wrong with a reprint of FANTASTIC FOUR #19 as the back up story?"

—F.P Jones

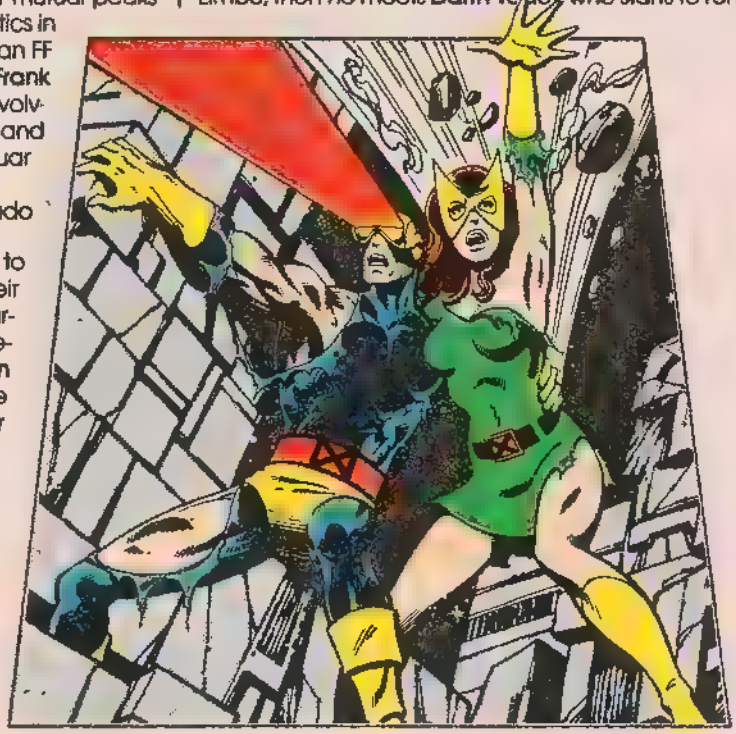
"The best Marvel story ever has definitely got to be THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, as seen in MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #1! I like it because it's so...well...sad. Most Marvel comics I've read are, even when a hero's dying, on an upswung beat, if you will. This story is one of the very few issues I've read and almost cried over."

—Stephen Patnode
E. Hanover, NJ

"I cast my vote for MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #5—GOD LOVES, MAN KILLS. It's the best writing I have ever seen Claremont do, and it characterizes mutant hatred to a 'T.'"

—Chris Day
Silver Spring, MD

"My favorite Marvel story ever is STAR WARS #92, "The Dream," By **Jo Duffy, Jan Duursema** and **Tom Mandrake**. The reason is this: The cover was excellent, but it is the best *story* ever, not the drawings. It starts off with **Luke Skywalker** in Limbo, then he meets **Darth Vader**, who starts to remove his

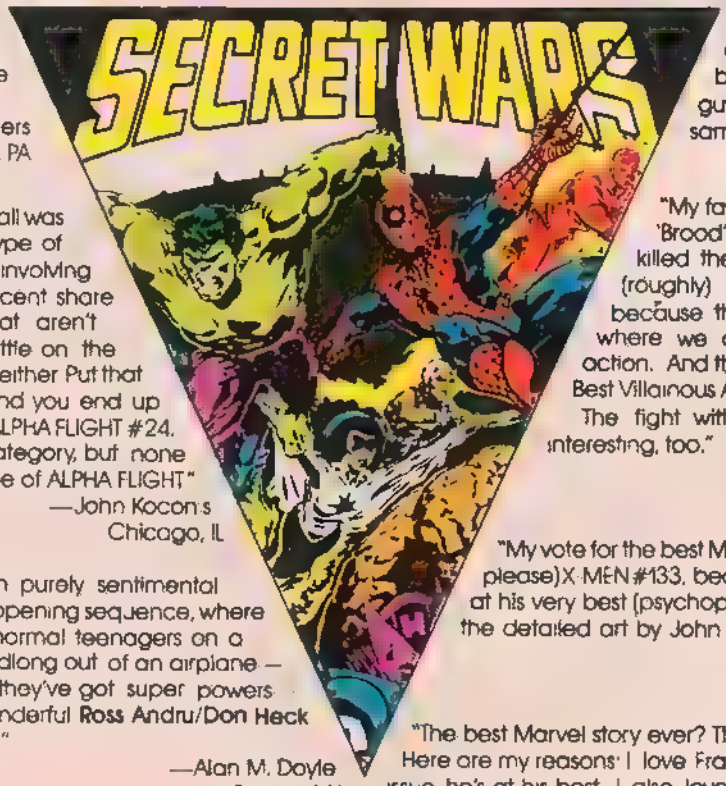


mask, then Luke wakes up. A bit later in the story Luke and his sister Leia have a talk — not what you see in most stories, a family talking over problems because they care about each other. Also in the story a new character comes into the story. Deeper into the story you learn about the new character who calls himself Denin, and also Luke fights Flint with lightsabers. Then at the end, Flint stops his evil ways."

Keith Walter
Belvidere, IL

"My favorite story is SECRET WARS #1. I loved it. SECRET WARS is my favorite Limited Series."

—Matt Summers
Malvern, PA



"The story I liked best of all was ALPHA FLIGHT #24. The type of stories I like are the ones involving a lot of characters, a decent share of action, endings that aren't obvious and being a little on the mystical side doesn't hurt either. Put that together with great art and you end up with a great comic like ALPHA FLIGHT #24. Other stories fit into that category, but none were as good as that issue of ALPHA FLIGHT."

—John Kocoris
Chicago, IL

"My favorite story? On purely sentimental grounds, X-MEN #37. The opening sequence, where we see five apparently normal teenagers on a strange mission leap headlong out of an airplane — only then revealing that they've got super powers — was such a thrill. The wonderful **Ross Andru/Don Heck** art didn't hurt a bit, either."

—Alan M. Doyle
Boston, MA

"I came up with not one, but two favorite issues of all time. SERGEANT FURY #100, 'When a Howler Falls!,' written by **Gary Friedrich** and drawn by **Dick Ayers**, and CAPTAIN AMERICA #267, 'The Man Who Made A Difference!,' written by **J.M. DeMatteis** and drawn by **Mike Zeck**. Why are these two my all-time favorites? It's simple. They're about America. That's right. The good old USA. They make political statements, particularly SGT. FURY #100. This is perhaps the most political issue that Marvel or any other comic company had published up to that time (1972). It touches on two immensely controversial topics of the time, civil rights and Viet Nam. Even in that hectic, troubled time, that issue, especially the last page, brought tears to my eyes. CAPTAIN AMERICA #267 had a similar result. It showed that the American Dream is not dead. While it is easy to look at all of the problems that face all Americans and to dwell on them, forgetting the good things that this country stands for, it is the good things that make this country the best in the world."

—Onnie L. Duvall
Reisterstown, MD

"My vote for the best Marvel story ever is and probably always will be 'Biology Class' from the classic ALPHA FLIGHT #14. **Mr. Byrne**, take a bow, you really outdid yourself. Just the thought of having that thing in my own city really gave me the chills."

—Jason Azzopardi
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

"I'm not a very old reader of Marvel, and out of the stories I have, I came up with these:

WHAT IF #33 'What If Dazzler Had Become The Herald Of Galactus?'

PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #1, in particular the 'Goose Rider' segment at the end.

MICRONAUTS #53-54 on Prisonworld.

SECRET WARS

THE ROCKET RACCOON Limited Series

DAREDEVIL #170-172 with the Kingpin returning to New York.

Of course, I had to pick one, and that was **Frank Miller's** ELEKTRA SAGA. It had everything I love in a comic—danger, romance, bad bad guys, good good guys, politics, death, ninjas, samurai, they're all there."

Andy Rankin

"My favorite story was the X-MEN 'Brood' story, when they finally killed the queen mother. It spans (roughly) X-MEN #151-167. I liked it because there were a lot of fights where we could see the X-Men in action. And the Brood could qualify for Best Villainous Aliens of the Year Award. The fight with the **New Mutants** was interesting, too."

—Angie Drobnic
Patterson, LA

"My vote for the best Marvel story ever is (drum roll please) X-MEN #133, because it showed Wolverine at his very best (psychopathic). And because of the detailed art by John Byrne."

—Davis Tullock
Louisville, KY

"The best Marvel story ever? This is mine: WOLVERINE #3. Here are my reasons: I love Frank Miller's art and in this issue he's at his best. I also love Mr. Claremont's way of telling a story. And Wolverine is one of my favorite characters. But overall, I love pages six and seven and the last two pages are what I most enjoyed —and still enjoy."

—Noel Gourvennec
Varieres, France

"My vote for favorite all-time story is the story that began with X-MEN #55 and then ran in issues #56, 'What Is The Power?;' #57, 'The Sentinels Live,' #58, 'Mission: Murder;' and #59, 'Do Or Die, Baby' (although I never cared for that last title). Why? (1) **Neal Adams**. (2) **Roy Thomas**. (3) It began a plotline and attitude that is still present in the Marvel Universe. (4) I love Adams' art. (5) It introduced **Havok**. (6) Jean Grey is first used to best effect. (7) Even sixteen years later, the story is as gripping as if I were reading it for the first time."

Lee Johnson
Goehner, NE

"No contest for me. It just has to be POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #63 and 64. The 'Luck and Death' two-parter. Jo Duffy is not only one of the best writers Marvel has, but she wrote the best **Power Man** and the best **Iron Fist** ever seen. The friendship between the two, the contrast, and the fact that both are seen as heroic, caring people despite their differences, is just amazing. **Kerry Gammill** is, again, the best to grace POWER MAN AND IRON FIST's pages. And the story—personal, fast moving, gripping and funny, it's the sort of human-level action story that makes **Galactus** and **Terminus** and all of those cosmic guys look hollow."

—Jason Beaumont
Lexington, KY

"My favorite Marvel story of all time was 'Even An Android Can Cry,' from AVENGERS #57 and 58, because it introduced the Vision in a very touching and classy way."

—Adam Burchess
Greenville, NC

"Here's my vote for the best Marvel story. I realize it doesn't have a chance against your great titles like FANTASTIC FOUR or POWER PACK but it's still my favorite. Before I reveal the name (I'll tell you the reasons why I love it (Just like the Oscars, huh?). Firstly, I love MTV—especially the videos of songs parodied from current hits—so naturally I liked this story. Another reason is that I like Spider-Man but sometimes the comics like that get a bit too serious so I look for something light-hearted. And there was no better way to combine the video craze and a little comedy as you did in (here it comes!)...PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM visits 'The Mysterious Island of Ducktor Doom!" in #1 of the comic of the same name."

—Bill Cuthbertson
Layton, UT

"I have to admit that my personal choice would have to be FANTASTIC FOUR #9. A delightfully piquant issue, it wins hands-down due to strong Kirby art, witty Lee dialogue and a terrifically off-beat story. Not only that, but #9 had **Namor, the Sub-Mariner**, appear in a tux. Yum, yum."

—Carol Kalish
Just Down The Hall

"I cast my vote for IRON MAN #28. It was one of the first Marvel books I'd ever read, back when I was about 8 years old. My reasons are these: the romantic flashback to **Tony Stark**'s youth, the unspoken tension between **Jasper Sitwell** and **Iron Man** over **Madame Masque**'s affections, the way Tony took out his frustrations in his battle with **the Controller**, that wonderfully moody **Don Heck** and **Johnny Craig** art, and a really striking cover by **Marie Severin**, as well! (Naturally, I've thought about why I loved this story so much as a child *since* then!)

—Horst Ingqvist

"My favorite Marvel story ever was a story I read today— the WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #1 The reason: Out of my 131 comics, which include THE NEW MUTANTS, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, DAZZLER, G.I. JOE, PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, THE NEW DEFENDERS and the SPIDER-MAN INDEX, plus many Limited Series which include THE GARGOYLE, ICE MAN, SECRET WARS, SECRET WARS II, THE TRANSFORMERS, STARRIORS, WOLVERINE and CONAN THE DESTROYER, this one Annual related the most to real life. Also to myself. I had a similar experience with meeting a blind date after talking to her for so long, and I loved it. Thanks, **Ann Nocenti**, you've made my day and a most memorable story."

—Kenny Kim
Anaheim Hills, CA

"After searching through stacks and boxes of comics, I've narrowed it down to this (drum roll please): FANTASTIC FOUR #258, 259 and 260, the last Dr. **Doom** trilogy. Why? Doom was one reason. Yes, Doom. We all saw a part of Doom that we had never seen before, the man. We saw him as a father and leader, but Mr. Byrne did a good job of reminding us that he was still a villain, and a villain is of course not good. Speaking of villains, **Tyros** was handled very well. The FF did okay, but you've got to remember they only had three members there. This brings us to the finale, where **the Silver Surfer** enters. I was glad to see this, and the FF needed him since **Reed** was gone (they probably would have needed him anyway). The end of the battle was good, yet it was eerie. Everyone is still asking, 'Is Doom *really* dead?'"

—Robie Larsen
Irving, TX

"My favorite story of all in all of Marvel Comics is the story of the Marvel Universe itself. For those of you who do not normally read it, it started way back in FANTASTIC FOUR #1 (and even before that, what with Timely's **Captain America, Human Torch** and **Sub-Mariner**), and has slowly but surely been edging onward over the years, now covering such a diversity of titles as THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, DOCTOR STRANGE, THE AVENGERS (both coasts), ALPHA FLIGHT, DAREDEVIL, THE X-MEN and even THE TRANSFORMERS (I think—didn't Spidey show up in one of their comics?). Plus others too numerous to mention. For breadth of plot and development of characters, it has few rivals, and for sheer imagination it probably has none. (Well, no more than ten, anyway.) Every week, I enjoy (couldn't quite bring myself to say 'thrill to') and devour the latest of the continuing story of the Marvel Universe in those clever little titles it uses to make people think that it's really a lot of different little stories instead of the grand saga it is. I'm not fooled. Actually, I see no reason why the saga should be so modest. Oh, well. Some things are just not made for us mortals to understand. Like any good story, it has its up points and down points, but as a whole, I must say the Marvel Universe's Continuing Story is one of the longest worth, my vote for the best Marvel story ever is the story of the Marvel Universe—a long time in the starting, still being told, and may it end—if it truly must (and I'm *not* for that!) just as fantastically and as wonderfully as it started!"

—David R. Henry
Grand Forks, ND

The results? Well, it's hard to say. Technically, X-MEN #137 won, with four votes out of the countless letters we received. But considering it topped a number of others, like THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, SECRET WARS, and PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #1 by only one vote (and those themselves were barely ahead of dozens of others), what it comes down to is that Marvel Comics has published such a variety of stories, from down-to-earth dramas to cosmic cataclysms, that everyone can find something that means something special to *them*.

We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to write in and vote, and when we do this again in 25 years for Marvel's *50th* Anniversary, we hope you'll vote again. Of course, dropping us a line now and then in the meantime to let us know how we're doing wouldn't be a bad idea either!

—*Kurt Busiek*

TORN BETWEEN THE X-MEN™ AND THE HELLFIRE CLUB™

FIRESTAR™

A FOUR-ISSUE ODYSSEY

BY TOM DEFALCO
MARY WILSHIRE
AND
STEVE LEIALOHA

FEATURING THE CO-STAR OF THE HIT SATURDAY MORNING TV SERIES
SPIDER-MAN AND HIS AMAZING FRIENDS!™

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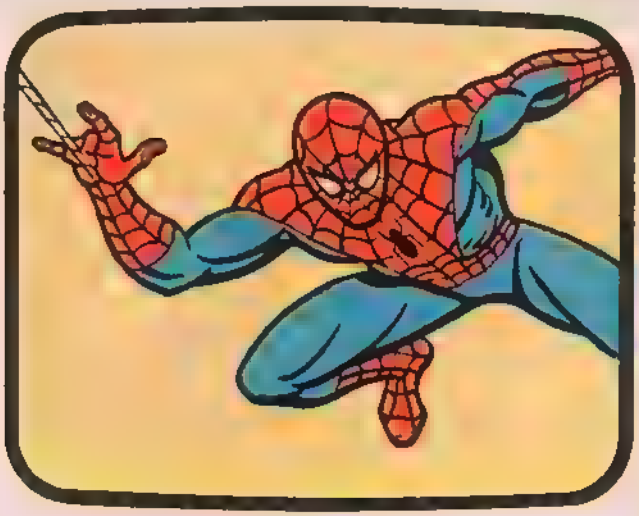
MARVEL MERCHANDISE

Marvel Enters the Video Age



Does the weather have you feeling down? Is there no one around because the snow is piling up all around town, and you're so bored you want to scream? And the new comics aren't coming out until Thursday?

Don't give in to despair just yet! Listen! Hear that? **"When Captain America throws his mighty shield..."** Is that a ray of sunshine peeking through the window? **"Doc Bruce Banner, belted by gamma rays, turns into the Hulk!"** Suddenly the day doesn't look so bleak and boring anymore!

Prism Entertainment has combined television and Marvel Comics so that you'll never have absolutely nothing to do ever again. They're making it possible to relive all of the spectacular animated adventures of Marvel Comics' greatest heroes and most dastardly villains with their new Marvel Comics Video Library collection.

That's right, now you can own a piece of the exciting and always surprising Marvel Age for your videocassette recorder. The collection debuts with 18 powerful titles that features such all-time favorites as **Captain America, the Incredible Hulk,** and **the Mighty Thor.** Pop in the tapes and watch these good guys along with others leap to animated life to do battle with an array of equally awesome baddies in the most complete new video library of Marvel characters.

And these 18 triple feature videocassettes are just the beginning. Prism is planning a continuity program that will bring 12 new hour-long Marvel videocassettes to your local video stores every 90 days for the next two years! That will mean that the Marvel Comics Video Library will feature over 100 tapes when the initial collection is complete.

This unique video collection is aimed at the people who have made Marvel the premier comic book publisher in America—you! With a low suggested retail selling price of $19.95 and some spectacular comic book style packaging, these videotapes are affordable, exciting, and fun! With this collection, whenever the urge hits you for some Marvel style action and adventure, just pop in a tape.

Local video stores will also have a special surprise to kick off the debut of the Marvel Comics Video Library. There will be live in-store personal appearances by **Spider-Man,** the Hulk, and Captain America in the coming months to promote the collection and subsequent additions to the series.

Other Marvel notables in the series of videocassette tapes include **Iron Man, Dr Doom, the Sandman, the Fly, Spider Woman, the Vulture, the Sub-Mariner, the Red Skull, the Thing, Mr Fantastic** and **Herbie the Robot!** With a cast like this, how can you afford not to get in on the action?

Get down to your favorite video store and look for Prism Entertainment's Marvel Comics Video Library. It's the fantastic meeting of the Video Age and the Marvel Age and a great way to beat the boredom blues. Your television may never be the same.

—Bill Slavicsek

MARVEL GOES UNDERNOW

Although people don't always realize it, America is just one of the many countries in which Marvel Comics are published! After Marvel has published its comics for its American audience, it licenses the right to reprint them to foreign publishers all over the world! Since 1982, thanks to Australia's Federal Publishing, Australians have thrilled to the adventures of **Spider-Man, the X-Men, Alpha Flight, the Hulk, Thor, Conan**, and too many others to mention! The faces of Spider-Man and the **Silver Surfer** are as familiar to Australian Marvelites as they are to their American counterparts, and it is those faces which will welcome Australians to the mammoth Australian Comic Convention to be held this January in Sydney, Australia!

For over two decades now, comic book conventions have been springing up all over America and Europe, serving as places for comics fans to meet writers, artists, and editors, talk to other fans, see rare science fiction and fantasy films, and, of course, buy lots and lots of old and new comic books. While Americans can find comicons from coast to coast, Australians aren't so lucky. Australian conventions are few and far between, and have never featured the opportunity to meet the people behind those great American comic books.

Until now, that is!

Because on the weekend of January 17-19, 1986, while Americans are busy bracing themselves against the cold, an expected crowd of more than ten thousand comic book collectors will be basking in the summertime sun of Sydney Harbour in Sydney, Australia. During this weekend, the world-famous Sydney Opera House and R.A.S. Sydney Showground, the year-round home of free concerts, films, and organ recitals, will spring to life with the sights and sounds of the Australian Comic Convention!

Offering film programs, a comic book auction, and a comic art contest, the convention will have something for everyone! But its most exciting feature may be its guest list! Guests at the convention will include Australian-born illustrator **Frants Kantor** and three of the greatest names in American comics: **Will Eisner, Jim Steranko,** and **Stan (the Man) Lee** himself!

Americans may not be familiar with the name of Frants Kantor, but he is well-known to Australian comics enthusiasts. Winner of an international art award for his political caricatures, Frants's work has appeared in many Australian magazines. Frants is the artist responsible for the beautiful renditions of Spidey and the Silver Surfer which adorn the convention's promotional materials.

While Frants may be unfamiliar to Americans, though, Stan Lee needs no introduction to anyone who's read even a *single* Marvel comic! Marvel's publisher and head of Marvel Productions in California, Stan is often thought of as the father of Marvel Comics! Together with artists such as Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, Stan created Spider-Man, the Hulk, the Fantastic Four, Thor, the X-Men, the Avengers, Iron Man...the list goes on and on! And although his duties out west prevent him from writing comic books on a regular basis, he still manages to find time to write the SPIDER-MAN comic strip which can be found in newspapers throughout the United States.

And can anyone fail to recognize

Famed Australian Spider-Man villain the Kangaroo—as scripted by Stan Lee!

the name of Jim Steranko? In the late 1960's, while comics-influenced pop art was appearing in galleries all over the world, Jim's work on series such as CAPTAIN AMERICA and the adventures of high tech superspy NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. was setting new standards for comic book art. Jim blended an unusual, cinematic approach with innovative layouts to produce masterpieces of the form! Much of this history-making artwork will be on display at the Australian convention. In fact, Jim is even preparing a special new painting to commemorate his trip to Australia.

Like Jim Steranko, Will Eisner has also set high standards for the comics industry. One of the grand masters of the medium, Will's THE SPIRIT, created in the 1940's, is carefully studied by comics professionals to this day! THE SPIRIT can now be found in reprint form in numerous books and in a monthly comic book published by Kitchen Sink Press. Together with his later work, including the book A CONTRACT WITH GOD, THE SPIRIT stands as testimony to a man whose true-to-life characterizations and impressive storytelling ability continue to make him a force to be reckoned with!

Finding any one of these men at a comics convention would not be easy. But having all three in the same place is a wonderful opportunity for all comic book fans and collectors! It's not surprising, then, that in addition to the usual autograph signings found at most conventions, radio and television interviews with these men are being planned!

Clearly, the convention's promoter, Richard Rae, is determined to make the Australian Comic Convention the milestone it deserves to be. And Marvel Comics is right behind him! "Richard is the sole organizer and force behind the convention," Marvel's administrative manager for international licensing, **Chuck Hoy**, explains. "He contacted us and asked for our assistance in it." Richard soon found that we were glad to help. A flood of Marvel merchandise including buttons, balloons, and special comic books such as the Spider-Man and **Power Pack** child abuse comic book were shipped to Australia and will be available at the con! And there will also be special video presentations to give fans down under the latest on Marvel's upcoming projects!

As if that weren't enough of an attraction, the convention will also have the largest number of comic books ever offered for sale in Australia, available from comics dealers from all over Australia and even overseas! And in addition, it will feature what Richard hopes will be the greatest auction of comics and comics-related merchandise ever seen in the Southern Hemisphere! Many rare and sought-after comics from the 1940's through the 1970's will be up for bid. Only rare and hard to-get items will be included in the auction, so you know that it's bound to be something special!

Convention attendees will have the chance to watch rare movie serials and television pilots, many of which have never been shown in Australia before! And they will be able to participate in the convention's special comic art contest! The contest will be open to any amateur artist who attends the convention and submits a black and white cover drawing and two story pages. The submissions will be judged by Messrs. Lee, Steranko, Eisner, and Kantor (a rare opportunity for aspiring artists in and of itself) and the winner's work will be published in a special comic book!

The Australian Comic Convention promises to be a very special occasion which will be long remembered, and we here at Marvel wish our friends down under the best of luck with this historic event. "I think that the thing that makes this convention great is that because it's in Australia, it shows how truly international Marvel is," says Chuck Hoy. "Marvel's not just a U.S. company—it's a worldwide publisher!"

We figure it just proves what we've said for years: Mighty Marvel is taking over the world!

—Shelly Fisch

STAR SPOTLIGHT

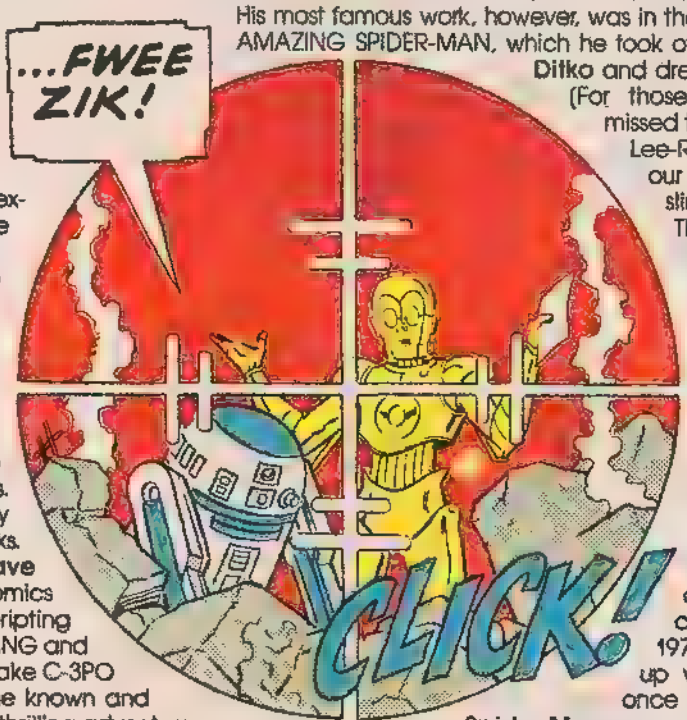
STAR WARS DROIDS™

There's some good news and some bad news for fans of Marvel's exciting Star Comics line. The good news is the debut of the newest comic book sensation from Star—DROIDS.

DROIDS, of course, features the cybernetic shenanigans of those lovable droids of Star Wars fame, **C-3PO** and **R2-D2**. So popular have the Star Wars characters become since that blockbuster motion picture exploded onto the silver screen that there has been an overwhelming demand for more and more exposure of the thrilling adventures of the Star Wars crew. Marvel has for years been producing the official comic book version of *Star Wars*. Star Comics' EWOKS, featuring the furry woodland creatures from the third Star Wars movie, *Return of the Jedi*, has in a short time become one of its most popular titles. DROIDS will undoubtedly be a worthy companion to both of those exciting books.

The writer for DROIDS will be **Dave Manak**, who's no stranger to Star Comics fans. He's one of Star's busiest writers, scripting such books as EWOKS, GETALONG GANG and PLANET TERRY. His exciting stories will take C-3PO and R2-D2 on adventures through the known and unknown universe finding strange and thrilling adventures wherever they go.

Of special interest to long-time Marvel fans is the DROIDS' artist—none other than Jazzy **John Romita, Sr.** who is not to be confused with **John Romita, Jr.**, his talented son, whose pulse-pounding pencils can be seen each month in the pages of THE X-MEN.



John is one of the mainstays of Marvel. He has been drawing comics since 1949 when a friend asked him to ghost pencil a comic book assignment. He drew comics in just about every conceivable genre—mystery, crime, science fiction, war, romance, western and jungle adventure. He even did a one-year stint on CAPTAIN AMERICA in the 1950's.

When the Marvel Age of Comics exploded in the 1950's, John found himself in the thick of things. He started off inking an issue of THE AVENGERS, then went on to draw such favorites as DAREDEVIL, HULK and CAPTAIN AMERICA. His most famous work, however, was in the pages of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, which he took over from **Steve Ditko** and drew for six years. (For those of you who missed the sensational Lee-Romita years on our favorite web-slinger, fret not. Those stories are currently being reprinted in the pages of MARVEL TALES!

For the past few years, John has served as Marvel's Art Director, overseeing at different times all of Marvel's covers and Special Projects. In 1977 he teamed up with **Stan Lee** once again on the **Spider-Man** newspaper strip which appears in hundreds of newspapers throughout the world. He relinquished the art chores on the strip in 1980.

Currently John directs the apprentice program (known around the Bullpen as Romita's Raiders) In addition to doing cover sketches and character designs.

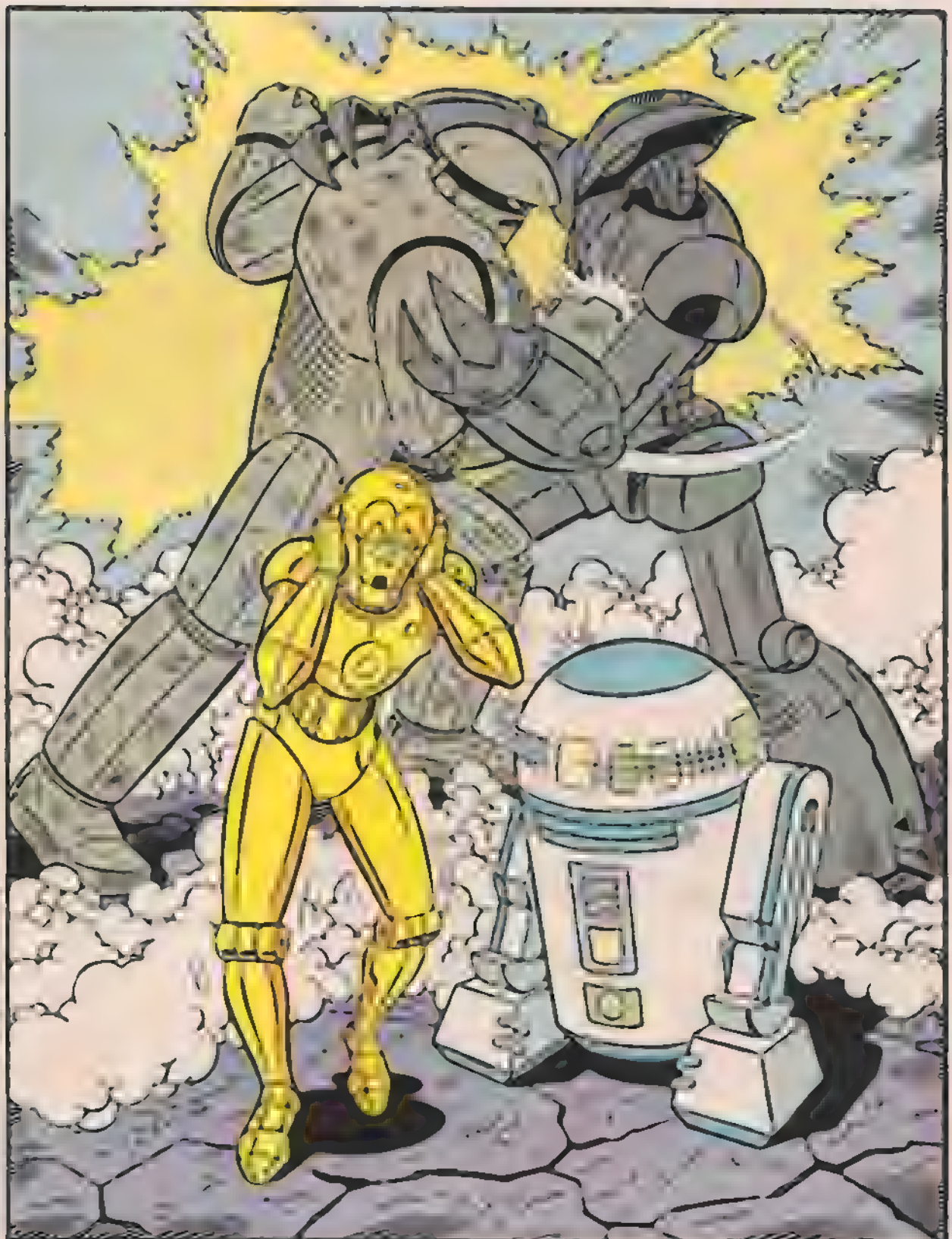
John is very excited about drawing DROIDS. Despite

the extensive and varied experience he has had in the comics field, John has never done anything resembling a Star Comic. When he expressed a desire to try something along those lines, editors **Tom DeFalco** and **Sid Jacobson** were quick to convince him to give it a whirl. John agreed.

"I didn't expect to be doing robots and spaceships," John told MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, "but it's fun. C-3PO and R2-D2 are good characters to work with." John plans on bringing his own distinctive touch to the book, and he relishes the challenge. "I'd really love to have a chance to develop DROIDS into something really distinctive," he said.

John will have his chance to do just that. Working with Dave Manak, there is little chance that he will do anything but his best work to date.

Oh, about the bad news—we fibbed. There is no bad news. Just make sure you don't miss the first exciting issue of DROIDS. —*Sandy Hausler*



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THE MARVEL AGE

Get set! It's time once again to turn back the calendar as we examine the events of 1970 in the Marvel Universe from S to X!

For **Spider-Man**, 1970 would feature the returns of some familiar characters in unfamiliar roles, as rendered by the classic Spider-team of Smilin' **Stan Lee** and Jazzy **Johnny Romita**! The very first villain to return was the web-slinger's first costumed foe, **the Chameleon**! He staged a series of daring robberies in a variety of identities, but was finally exposed when he posed as the one person Spider-Man knew could not be the genuine article—**Peter Parker**! Spidey put the evil master of disguise out of commission, but the year had hardly begun! After defeating the high-jumping **Kangaroo**, Spidey accepted an invitation to appear on coast-to-coast television on *The Midnight Show*, not knowing that the guest shot would lead to his encountering another old enemy—the ever-shocking **Electro**! Spider Man managed to short-circuit the high-voltage villain, but with his costume in terrible shape and his hands bruised and burned from the fight, Spidey mused that "if this is a victory, I'd hate to be defeated!" And for a while, it looked as though ol' Webhead was going to experience defeat first hand! It wasn't long before he found himself in the middle of a mammoth gang war involving **the Kingpin** and a new criminal mastermind, **the Schemer**. With the aid of a large gang and a special car capable of running on land, in water, and in the air, the Schemer managed to challenge the Kingpin's position in the underworld! The Kingpin was shocked to learn that his wife, **Vanessa**, seemed to have helped the Schemer! But he was even more shocked to learn that the Schemer was none other than his own son, **Richard**! These shocks sent the Kingpin into a catatonic state and Spider Man, realizing that the threat of the Kingpin was over, took his leave. As he swung home, still groggy after his battle, Spidey was secretly observed by **the Black Widow**, who had recently resigned as an agent of S.H.I.E.L.D. She adopted a new costume and decided to fight Spider-Man to see what gave him his powers. The two fought and despite his growing exhaustion, Spider-Man managed to come out on top! The Black Widow realized that Spidey's powers were natural, not the result of weapons, and that she would have to face the future in her own style!

The wall-crawler soon had other problems as he was faced with the return of one of his deadliest foes—**Dr. Otto Octavius**, better known as **Doctor Octopus**! The battle began as Doc Ock mentally commanded his arms to travel across the country and break him out of prison! Once free, Doc tried to hijack a jumbo jet for a ten million dollar ransom, but Spidey put an end to his plans. Everyone but the web-slinger thought that the evil scientist died in the ensuing plane crash, but before long, Spider-Man was proved right! What followed was one of the most savage and desperate Spider-Man/Dr. Octopus battles ever! Before the fight was over, Spidey was thrown off a rooftop, and forced to hide in a ventilator shaft and watch as one of the people closest to him died! As Ock's arms thrashed around during a rooftop struggle, a chimney was toppled, sending chunks of brick plunging towards a small boy standing below! The child would have been killed, if not for the bravery of police captain **George Stacy**, **Gwen's** father, who threw the boy aside! The child was saved, but Captain Stacy was crushed instead! Spider-Man tried to rush him to a doctor, but Captain Stacy insisted he stop on an isolated rooftop. There, Captain Stacy's last breaths were spent asking Spidey to take care of Gwen. Spidey realized that the aged police captain must have always known the secret of his dual identity, but had never told! Peter swore to care for Gwen, but he soon found Spider-Man being blamed for Captain Stacy's death by **J. Jonah Jameson**, the public, and even Gwen herself! It was apparent already that 1971 wasn't going to be easy for the amazing arachnid!

Meanwhile, **the Savage Sub-Mariner** was having troubles of his own, courtesy of writer **Roy Thomas** and artists **Marie Severin**, **John Buscema**, and **Sal Buscema**. His gills closed in an alien experiment, Namor searched for a cure while also attempting to prevent all-out war between Atlantis and the surface world! No sooner had he been cured by the Atlantean scientist **Ikthon** than he found himself fighting demons, an al-

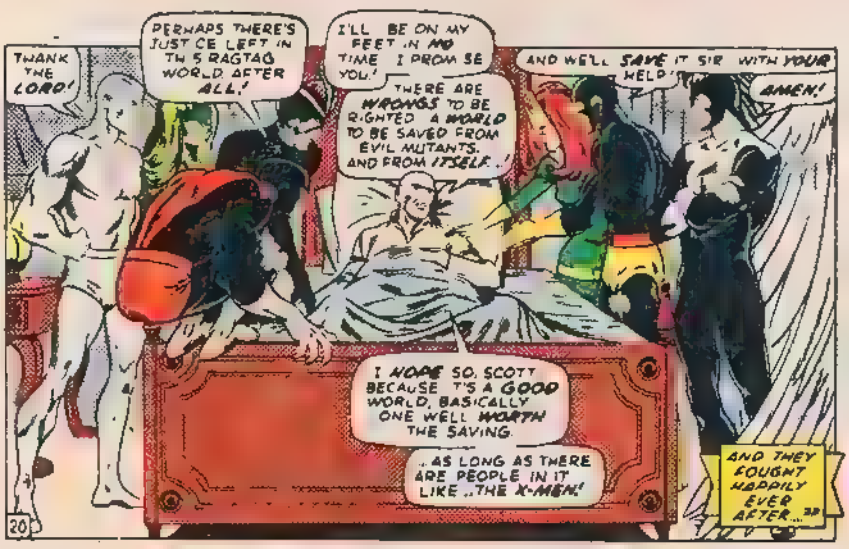
lance between the Warlord Krang, Dr Dorcas, and Orka the Human Killer Whale, and one of his most vicious enemies, Tiger Shark. He then attempted to form an alliance with his fellow Golden Age hero, the Red Raven, to defend his home against pollution of the air and water. But the Raven had gone mad and wanted nothing less than complete domination of the Earth! He and Namor fought and in the end, the Raven brought about his own death. Subby soon found himself fighting with and against a series of old friends including Hercules, the Kree Captain Marvel, the Inhuman Triton and the Stingray! The year ended with Namor's first encounter with Llyra of Lemuria. Namor believed Llyra to be dead at the end of the story, not knowing that she would return and be responsible for the death of one of the people dearest to him!

The mighty Thor's year was characterized by a series of fearsome battles, both on Earth and in Asgard, as depicted by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and John Buscema. After Earthly struggles with the Ringmaster and his Circus of Crime, Ulik the Troll, and the Crypto-Man, Thor returned to Asgard to find that while Odin replenished his power in Odinsleep, the mischievous Loki had seized the throne of Asgard for himself! But Loki hadn't realized that with Odin gone, the spell which bound the fire demon Surtur would be broken! Loki fled, leaving Thor and his warriors to defend Asgard against Surtur, but it took the power of Odin himself to defeat him! The battle over, Thor barely had time to catch his breath before he was thrust into combat with the Stranger and the Abomination! No sooner had the thunderer returned to Earth than Loki surprised him with a mystical living mask which exchanged their faces! Thor, now wearing Loki's face, found himself forced to fight the two people closest to him, the brave Balder and Lady Sif! Eventually, Thor convinced them of his identity and with their help, Loki was defeated yet again. But this merely left Thor free to combat the menace of Marvel's greatest super-villain, Doctor Doom! Doom kidnapped Thor in his civilian identity of Dr. Donald Blake and hoped that the brilliant young surgeon could repair his horribly scarred face. The damage was so severe that not even Don Blake could help him. Doom imprisoned him, but Don changed to Thor and escaped! After almost losing his hammer to Doom, Thor defeated the evil monarch and destroyed a bank of missiles which threatened to destroy every major city on Earth!

The Earth faced different sorts of threats in the pages of THE X-MEN, courtesy of writers Roy Thomas and Denny O'Neil and artists Don Heck, Neal Adams, and Sal Buscema. The X-Men returned from an adventure in Ka-Zar's Savage Land to find themselves confronted with a new menace: a brash young Japanese mutant called Sunfire, who tried to use his solar powers to destroy the United States as revenge for the bombing of Hiroshima! It took the death of his statesman father to show Sunfire the error of his ways, and the X-Men left the young mutant to his grief. They returned home to Westchester and found Havok and Lorna Dane (later known as Polaris) waiting with urgent news—Earth was in deadly danger, the next target of the warlike alien race, the Z'Nox! Even more shocking to the X-Men was the source of this news—Professor Charles Xavier, whom the X-Men thought dead! He explained that he had been spending all this time preparing for the coming of the Z'nox! The "Professor X" who had been killed was actually the X-Men's old enemy the Changeling, who had reformed and agreed to fill in for Xavier! Only one power could stop the Z'Nox—human compassion! Xavier united the emotions of millions of people and directed it at the Z'Nox. Feeling their will to conquer eroding, the Z'Nox fled! But the effort had taken its toll on Xavier and he collapsed into a coma! The only clue concerning a cure was a mental image of the Hulk which the comatose Xavier managed to transmit. The X-Men tracked down the Hulk and fought with him until Marvel Girl could use mental pressure to turn him back into Bruce Banner. They learned that Banner and Xavier had collaborated on a theory of the gamma ray treatment of mental exhaustion, and that Banner had a device based on this theory in one of his secret labs! The X-Men took the device and used it to heal Professor X. But it was with this happy ending that the original series came to a close. The merry mutants would appear only in guest shots and reprints for the next few years, until they burst back onto the scene with a brand new set of characters! The New X-Men went on to become the sensation of the seventies.

But that was yet to come. And the years until then were anything but dull, as we will see next time when we plunge into the Marvel Universe of 1974! You'll hate yourself if you miss it!

—Shelly Fisch


THANK THE LORD!
PERHAPS THERE'S JUST CE LEFT IN TH S RAGTAG WORLD AFTER ALL!
I'LL BE ON MY FEET IN NO TIME I PROM SE YOU!
THERE ARE WRONGS TO BE RIGHTED A WORLD TO BE SAVED FROM EVIL MUTANTS, AND FROM ITSELF..!
AND WE'LL SAVE IT SIR WITH YOUR HELP!
AMEN!
I HOPE SO, SCOTT BECAUSE T'S A GOOD WORLD, BASICALLY ONE WELL WORTH THE SAVING.
..AS LONG AS THERE ARE PEOPLE IN IT LIKE ..THE X-MEN!
AND THEY FOUGHT HAPPILY EVER AFTER...
20

It is written...

Send your letters to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016

Uh-oh. With a portentious title like that, we're going to have our hands full living up to it! Well, we'll do our best—and if we slip, judge us not too harshly, okay? (By the way, credit goes to *Anthony P. Anderson* of Everett, Washington for gifting us with such an awe-inspiring title. Thanks, Anthony—and hey, we'd like to remind all you Marvel-philes out there that in the next ten years, we're going to need 120 more letters page titles! So send in your suggestions now!)

Let's start off with a few comments on our very first MARVEL AGE ANNUAL. . .

Dear MARVEL AGErs,

Three cheers for your first Annual! Talk about getting your money's worth! The art was superb, especially the cover! That was an unbelievable idea to use the phone to get everyone into the plot. (Speaking of phones, there isn't really a Phone Ranger, is there? Or should I say "was" since your mysterious assassin appears to have disconnected him permanently.)

C.C. Lansden
1-11 Marble Hill Ave.
Bronx, NY 10463

Dear MARVEL AGErs,

Your Annual was great! I have a great suggestion—why don't you turn that excellent cover into a poster? You could probably make some great money on it. Just a suggestion but I think it would be great. Your Coming Attractions really grabbed my interest—you'll have me buying every single Marvel comic book coming out!

Rene Anaya
2112 Edenwald Ave.
Bronx, NY 10466

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I want to ask you a few questions concerning your Annual.

1) Why wasn't Rom on your cover or in the story, "Information Please." Well, here's the answer. Rom is in space and couldn't be contacted, unless you wanted to pay the long distance bill, and the cover was done after he left. Good enough?

2) Where was Hembeck's Page?

3) Why did the cover say 50¢ when in #31 you said it would be free?

Robert Robertson
2943 Peacock St.
Hope Mills, NC 28348

Here's your answers, *Robert*:

1) If *Kurt* could call *the Squadron Supreme* and *Devil Dinosaur*, he could've called *Rom* even in space. The reason he didn't is that he was only calling characters who had regular Marvel Universe titles (i.e. not STAR WARS, CONAN, G.I. JOE, etc.) that weren't cancelled. ROM has been cancelled, so it wasn't on Kurt's phone list. (So why did Kurt call Moon Knight? Well, MOON KNIGHT was cancelled *after* the Annual was done.)

2) In the centerspread of every regular issue of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, like always. The Annual may not have had Hembeck, but it didn't have most of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE's regular features.

3) The Annual was given away free at various conventions, as we said in #31. Due to reader demand, we also made it available for 50¢ at comics stores. You've gotta admit—50 cents for 48 pages with no ads is still some kinda deal!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
I just finished reading the story in the MARVEL AGE ANNUAL and it was the stupidest thing I ever read. The Phone Ranger?
By the way, I loved it.

Brian Wolfgram
9385 Fair Lane
Freeland, MI 48623

Uh...thanks, *Brian*. The Phone Ranger would thank you too, but he's dead.

To MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE:
The double sized Annual was FABULOUS!
The cover— amazing!!! (Make it into a poster, pa-leez!)
"Information Please"—loved it, a great laugh, too!
"Marvel A-Z"— EXCELLENT!!! (Looking forward to all the new comics, especially THE MARVEL SAGA.)
The rest was great too!
Only one bad comment: Get rid of that **DEVIL DINOSAUR!**

Joey Faraci
300 Antibes Drive #809
Willowdale, Ontario
M2R 3N8 CANADA

Dear Marvel,
Bring back Devil Dinosaur and **Moon Boy!** Please!

Chad Norwood
Rte. 3 Box 4
Ardmore, IN 38449

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
In re: MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #1: MORE! Please?
It may be a radical suggestion — but how about dropping the monthly MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE in favor of a bimonthly (or if necessary, quarterly) in the same format as the Annual?

Tom Zmudzinski
9007 Ivanhoe Rd.
Oxon Hill, MD 20744

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
I'd like to compliment you on your Annual. I thought it was a great idea and I think that you should do a page on every title that you have out every year so that we see what we are missing. They don't necessarily have to tie in together. Also, you could include DREADSTAR, etc. It made me mad to see that you didn't include POWER MAN AND IRON FIST.

John Reeves
8331 Garden Parks
Houston TX 77075

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
According to your Annual, there are several movies based on Marvel characters "in the works." Does this mean we can expect to see them, or are they just ideas?

David Gill
Huntington Beach, CA

We get a lot of questions about movies based on our characters *David*, and the way it works is this: If a movie producer wants to make a movie about Marvel characters, he'll "option" the rights (that means he's temporarily buying the rights to film our characters). After that, he has to find backers, get a script, line up a director, a cast, production crew...all kinds of things. It takes a long time, and at any point during this, the producer might run out of money, or change his mind, or fail to get a good enough script, or any number of things. Most of the movie projects that start up never get finished. So we don't always mention the various movie projects that are in the works featuring Marvel characters—even though there are sometimes six or seven going on—because most of them don't get finished. We don't want to tell you that there's going to be a Marvel movie out and then have it not happen. But there are a few projects in the works now that are well under way and it looks real likely that they'll be finished. One of them is a Cannon Group film of SPIDER-MAN that is planned to be out for Christmas 1986, or George *Lucas'* HOWARD THE DUCK. If these, or any other film (or other adaptation, like the proposed CAPTAIN AMERICA Broadway show) becomes a sure thing, we'll tell you all about it in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. But as long as they're just "in the works," we don't want to talk about them too much, so you don't get disappointed if they collapse. Okay?

Dear Jim and crew,
In MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #31 I read a letter from John Jackson Jr. In it he requested that you print 23" by 35" posters of famous Marvel covers, such as X-MEN #1 and AMAZING FANTASY #15. Well, I don't know if John Jackson Jr. has seen the cover of MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #1, but I sure have! And if John Jackson Jr. *has* seen the cover of MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #1 I'm sure he wouldn't mind if I added it to the list of famous Marvel covers to do as posters.

John Conroy
6130 Delafield Ave.
Bronx, NY 10471

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
Remember MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #1? Of course you remember, because it was excellent! Well, can you make a poster of the cover?

Richard Donato
67 President St.
Staten Island, NY 10314

Hmm. Is there a pattern emerging here?

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
I went to seven comic shops—no good. Then I went to the eighth shop—and there it was! The 1985 MARVEL AGE ANNUAL! I was so happy. I got out my fifty cents, left it on the counter and ran home. I read it. I loved it! At first, while I was reading I thought, "What's going on?" But then all became clear and I was happy. I was pleased to be able to read Marvel A to Z—but you forgot to put in MOON KNIGHT. Well, until **Wolverine** joins **Power Pack**, make mine MARVEL!

David Croghan
3045 Villa Ave.
Bronx, NY 10468

Not that much room left this month—but let's see if we can answer a few questions...

Dear Marvel,
I was looking in a comic book price guide, and under AMAZING ADVENTURES it had...**Doctor Droom**, first super hero of the Marvel Age of Comics. That means he came before the **Fantastic Four**! So I would like to know, if this is true, how come you never mention him?

Robert Anderson
605 Hunter Hill Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73127

Well, Doc Droom wasn't *exactly* the first super hero of the Marvel age ...he's a sorcerer, and uses magic spells instead of super powers. And who says we don't mention him? We just changed his name (to avoid confusion with a certain Latverian monarch), and he shows up now and again...as Doctor Druid!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
Is there a stronger metal than adamantium?

Eric Agnew
821 Lori Lane
Chula Vista, CA 92010

Nope. *Captain America's* shield is made out of *something* that's tougher than adamantium, but nobody's ever been able to analyze exactly what it is.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
Talk about mess-ups! Today I mailed you a letter with a request for lists of the issues of appearances of certain good and bad guys, but as soon as

the mailman picked it up, I realized that I forgot to put in the stamped, self-addressed envelope for you to send the information in. So, this will have the envelope (honest!) and a repeat of the list:

1) Absorbing Man, 2) The Black Cat, 3) Blacklash/Whiplash, 4) Bounty Hunter, 5) the Micronauts (aside from their own series), 6) Rocket Racer, 7) Scorpion, 8) The Rhino, 9) Nimrod and 10) The Punisher.

Plus, which comics had lead-ins to SECRET WARS (the original series)?

Mike Basial
Route 5, Box 1387
Fredericksburg, VA 22405

We'd love to give you that information, Mike, but it's a full-time job getting the new books out, and we just don't have the time to look up all the appearances of all those characters. We're organizing the information in our OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX series, but that's nowhere near complete yet.

If any of you Marvel fans reading this know any of the information Mike is looking for, how about dropping him a line to let him know? Aside from helping out a fellow Marvelite, getting in touch with letter-writers is a good way to make friends! Give it a try!

Dear Marvel,

FRED HEMBECK DESTROYS THE MARVEL UNIVERSE was supposed to come out in April, 1985. Now it's September and it's not out. Why?

Eric Green
144-15 41st Ave.
New York, NY 11355

FRED HEMBECK DESTROYS THE MARVEL UNIVERSE was taken off the schedule due to some production problems, *Eric*. There are some editorial revisions that need to be made. When and if they're made, you can expect to see the book come out. Watch the Newswatch and the Coming Attractions for word of it!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I'm studying to be a comic book cartoonist, and I was wondering...if I thought I was good enough to work at Marvel, would I have to go all the way to New York to try out?

John Parker
6519 Kingman Trail
Tallahassee, FL 32305

Nope. Just send photocopies of your art samples to the Submissions Editor here at Marvel, *John*. Lots of our artists don't live in New York. *Paul Smith*, *Art Adams* and *Terry Shoemaker*, for example, live way off in California, and *Mike Golden* lives in your own home state of Florida! All we require to work at Marvel is that you be great.

Only room for one more letter! And what would a MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE letters page be without a question about mutants?

Dear Marvelites,

I am here to ask a few questions about everyone's favorite people...mutants.

1) What causes mutants to be mutants, and why do some of them have a mutated look and others do not?

2) What are the differences between mutants and other superpowered heroes?

3) Speaking of mutants, will the new series X-FACTOR have anything to do with THE X-MEN besides being former X-Men and being mutants?

4) Why don't other super powered teams have any prejudice problems like the X-Men?

Larry Trumbaturi
7827 Hampson #D
N.O. LA 70118

Tough questions. Let's see if we can answer 'em.

1) A variety of things. Some mutants' parents were exposed to radiation before the mutant was conceived, in some cases, it might just be scattershot evolution. As mutation often results from a random change in a fertilized cell's genetic makeup, we can never truly know all the causes of mutation. As for why some mutants look mutated and some don't, well, some mutations are obvious physical ones (as in the case of *Nightcrawler*) and some aren't (*Shadowcat*).

2) There are two things that define a mutant: a) A mutant's powers or attributes are part of his genetic makeup from birth, and b) a mutant exhibits powers or attributes that his parents do not have. Thus, *Spiderman* isn't a mutant because his spider-powers were not in his genetic pattern from birth, and if *Magneto* were to have a child with magnetic powers, that child would not be a mutant because there was nothing in his genetic makeup that differed from his parents.

3) Isn't that enough? Seriously though, it would be hard for X-FACTOR to avoid bumping stories with X-MEN and NEW MUTANTS.

4) Maybe it's because most super heroes are seen as individuals—for example, *Iron Man* is seen as a heroic individual, and people respect him for that. Mutants, on the other hand, are seen as a separate race—and people are scared of the *idea* (also, people find it hard to separate what *evil* mutants do from what *good* mutants do—and end up fearing all of them because of the actions of a few).

And that *is* all the room we've got this month, folks, so it's time to wrap this up and get going on the next one! *Janet Jackson* and the production staff keep badgering us for more articles to design and put together, and frankly, we're not sure how long we can hold them off!

See you in thirty!

AT LAST!

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